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CONGLETON.
From a Drawing by MR. CHARLES WILSON.

CONGLETON

Past and Present.

A History of this old Cheshire Town,

BY

ROBERT HEAD.

"To please one feeling heart, for one calm, thoughtful hour,
Go, little book! content if thine the power."

Jesse.

CONGLETON:
PRINTED BY THE AUTHOR.
MDCCCLXXXVII.

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TO

THE MEMORY OF

RANDLE WILBRAHAM, ESQUIRE,

OF RODE HALL,

IN THE COUNTY OF CHESTER,

FOR TWENTY-SIX YEARS HIGH STEWARD OF THE BOROUGH OF CONGLETON,

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED

IN HIGH APPRECIATION OF

THE INTEREST HE EVER TOOK IN THE PROSPERITY OF THIS TOWN,

AND

IN GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF

MUCH THOUGHTFUL KINDNESS TO

AND

OF SYMPATHY WITH

THE AUTHOR

IN

ITS PREPARATION.

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Preface.

IT is believed that Shakespeare has provided a motto for everything, whether it be for a new button, or a system of philosophy, and that a fitting epithet to apply to such a work as this may be aptly drawn from a speech of Iago, in which that worthy described the mission of certain people as being to "chronicle small beer." For to the ordinary reader, especially should he dwell in parts where pride of locality is practically unknown, the contents of my humble volume must inevitably be of all small beer the very smallest. But by most, if not by all my readers, I trust that "CONGLETON, PAST AND PRESENT" may not be so regarded. The aim has been to produce in simple form an account of Congleton's greatest men, of its achievements, its progress, its struggles, and its state in the old and present time. The imperfections in the work I know are many, but these I leave to the forbearance of my critics, believing that upon my efforts a greater worker at some future time in the same field can with safety build. Content for me if the result of my labours should kindle in the hearts of Congletonians an increased love for the old place, and in the mind of the stranger the expressed curiosity of Sebastian to Antonio, "shall we go see the reliques of this town?"

Referring to the origin of this volume, four years ago I was prompted by the long-felt want of a guide or handbook to Congleton to prepare some such compilation, never dreaming

for a moment that the outcome of my efforts was to assume its present proportions. In addition to a large collection of MS. notes on local matters already in my possession, many kind people lent to me various documents and old manuscripts of more or less value, and books containing scraps of Congleton history. At once I saw there was material for a more extensive work than was first anticipated, and I resolved to compile as complete a History as possible. Moreover, there were also the Town Records, consisting of thirty folio volumes of valuable information relating to early Congleton, local laws and usages, and the general course of town government. The perusal and transcribing of these muniments alone occupied me nearly two years; but the interest derived from the copious extracts I have introduced throughout the work repays the time and trouble devoted to their study.

And now that the last sheet of my book lies wet before me, supervening every pleasure the retrospection of the period occupied in its preparation brings to me, is the sadness born of the knowledge that one, at all times foremost with his valuable council and ready assistance, is not here to witness the completion of what he so much interested himself with. I allude to my cousin, the late Mr. Charles Wilson, of Albion Grove, London, to whom I owe the greater portion of the drawings in this book. Shortly after completing his last drawing, namely the frontispiece, he met his death whilst sketching from the Dover cliffs.

Among others interested in this work who have died since its commencement is Mr. Randle Wilbraham, the venerable High Steward of Congleton, and much respected owner of Rode Hall. He died at the age of eighty-six, in the Spring of the present year.

To my subscribers both thanks and apologies are due: thanks for the unexpected confidence and support they have given to this my first literary attempt; and apologies for the long delay that has occurred since the announcement of the work. The latter has been unavoidable, many unforeseen obstacles having arisen, and the whole compilation having been effected in moments snatched from the daily routine of a somewhat engrossing occupation. Further, I would also explain that some slight deviation from the original prospectus has been made, among which, in place of the promised plan of the

town, I have substituted the picturesque drawing of old Biddulph Hall.

Throughout the volume I have acknowledged my indebtedness for information received from various sources, and I now more especially thank those, who, with thoughtful kindness, have helped me with their ability and experience, namely:—

To JOHN WILSON, ESQ., LL.D., Town Clerk of Congleton, I am particularly indebted for valued and kind help, including much information respecting the town, its inhabitants, and institutions, which he is so well able to give. Without this aid from an old resident in Congleton, whose literary and scholarly attainments are so widely known, I could not have made the work what it is; and with gratitude I acknowledge and shall ever remember his many kindnesses. I would also acknowledge the privilege freely granted me of access to the Town Records.

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To my good friend and kinsman, MR. JOHN HILL, of Wimbledon, for considerable help in deciphering old manu-

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I would also acknowledge the courteous attention shewn to me on several occasions by the officials at the British Museum and Public Record Office, London, and for their assistance in searching various Records preserved there.

Congleton, Cheshire,
August, 1887.

Introduction.

THE old Borough and Market Town of Congleton is situated in the south-eastern portion of the County of Chester. Just enclosed within the winding boundary of Northwich Hundred, its undulating surface and general surroundings form a pleasing contrast to the level appearance which mostly characterises that district.

Northwich Hundred extends from Church Lawton to Winnington Bridge, near Northwich; skirts the Hundreds of Nantwich and Edisbury on its western side; passing above Over Peover it leaves the Hundred of Bucklow on the left, and joins that of Macclesfield; thence continues to Somerford, near Congleton, and on to Buglawton, where the river Dane for a short distance divides it from Macclesfield Hundred; after which it meets the confines of the Staffordshire boundary near Rushton. This district, though naturally flat, is rendered pleasing to the eye by the plentiful stretches of rich woodland that intersect it: while the old fashioned half-timbered houses, dotted here and there, and the few specimens of ancient Church Architecture which it contains, render it interesting and noteworthy to the stranger.

Few inland towns possess a more picturesque locality than Congleton, which is built on a gentle acclivity rising from the southern side of the river Dane. So gradual is this acclivity, that when viewed from an eminence, the town appears nestling in

a green and pleasant valley, with hilly barriers guarding its east and south sides: its other extremities being interspersed with wooded heights and verdant undulations. This peculiarly pleasant situation has not unreasonably suggested the origin of its name: Congle, (British) from *congl*, a corner—a town or place at the corner, bend, or shoulder of a ridge.[a] Hemmed in, so to speak, on its eastern side by the lofty ridge of Cloud Hill, the outlines of which form a graceful promontory overlooking the town; and facing its more southern extremity, rising from the uneven track of Congleton Edge, are the craggy heights of Mow.

Cloud Hill, from "*clud*," a rock, (Anglo-Saxon[b]) more commonly called Cloud End, is an irregular mass of millstone grit, rising 1190 feet above the sea level. From its summit the prospect well rewards the climber. Right away, almost to the Mersey itself, stretch the entire plains of Cheshire; spire and steeple and mist identifying busy town and quiet hamlet.

Mow Cop, from "*mau*," and "*copt*"—a lofty summit, (Anglo-Saxon[c]) rises to a height of 1101 feet. Sloping towards the wild moorland of Congleton Edge, it forms the boundary between this county and that of Staffordshire, itself an off-set of that Pennine range, not inaptly termed "the backbone of England." Cresting its highest ridge is an artificial ruin, consisting of a rounded tower, arched gateway, and loop-holed wall, erected above a century ago by the Wilbrahams of Rode Hall, to mark the boundary of the Rode estate as well as the confines of the two counties. Mow Cop is situated about four miles, and Cloud three miles from Congleton.

Michael Drayton, the old Warwickshire poet of three centuries ago, marked the prominent structure of this former hill:

> "The high-crown'd *Shutlingslawe*,[d]
> And *Molcop* be thy mounds, with those proud hills whence rove
> The lovely sister brooks, the silvery Dane and Dove,
> Cleere *Dove*, that makes to *Trent*; the other to the West."[e]

The river Dane traverses the banks of Congleton near to its southern boundary. Anciently called Davon or Daven, (from

[a] Edmunds' "Names of Places," page 191. In the Domesday Record it is Cogletone; in the Henry de Lacy Charter, Congulton; and in Saxton's Map of Cheshire, 1577, Congerton.

[b] Sainter's "Scientific Rambles," page 23. [c] *Ibid.*

[d] The beautiful cone of Shutlingslawe, or Shutlingslow, rises 1718 feet above the sea level, the highest ground in Cheshire. [e] Polyolbion, 11th Song.

which the Cheshire name of Davenport is derived), it rises near the Goyt among the mossy moorlands west of Axe Edge. The banks of this river abound with pictures of more than common beauty, winding through verdant pastures and wooded dells. Passing Clond on the Bosley side, it flows on its stony bed to Congleton, where it forms a principal adornment to the Park grounds; and after doing valuable duty here continues its almost level course unto its junction with the river Weaver near Northwich, the united waters meeting the Mersey at Runcorn.

The brook HOWTIE has its rise among the hills at Newport, and, winding by the outskirts of Astbury and Priesty Fields, flows through Congleton under Bridge Street on its way to join the river Dane. After incessant rains this little stream has been known to swell into disastrous floods, causing much destruction of property.

The situation of the town has been already described. A few traces of its ancient street architecture still survive the changes wrought by time, and here and there may be seen specimens of the old black and white buildings of which the town originally was composed. These were built principally of wood, irregular in height, gable-fronted, and roofed with straw or large stone flags, with windows of quaint diamond-shaped panes. The accompanying illustration[f] conveys a graphic representation of their character. The first building on the left of the sketch is the only portion now existing (which immediately joins the present Town Hall[g].) Next to this is the old Guild Hall, and the shops, over which was the town prison. These, with the Market Cross, were removed during the last century.

The oldest building of the present time is the "White Lion" Inn, High Street, once one of the finest town mansions of ancient Congleton, where it is said John Bradshaw, (the Regicide) when a lad, was apprenticed to the law. Much of its beauty some vandal hands have marred by defacing with unsightly wash the antique carvings of its exterior. The "Lion and Swan" is another handsome specimen of Elizabethan age, the central portions of which have been preserved much in the original character. Mr. Alfred Rimmer, the Chester

[f] See page 11.

[g] Now occupied by Mr. T. W. Morris, grocer. The bell turret, which formerly contained the fire bell, was removed but a few years back.

Lion and Swan Inn.
In the 18th Century.

Antiquary, likens it to the old country Inn in *Barnaby Rudge*.[h]

During the present century numerous alterations have changed much of the original character of the town. Quaint old buildings have been replaced by others more substantial though less picturesque. Seventy years ago a row of low thatched houses and the old post office, near Swan Bank, (then styled "Clay Bank,") were removed. As late as 1814 an unsightly malt kiln disfigured Chapel Street, and in 1856 the same street was further improved by the removal of several cottages from the site where now stands the Magistrates' and Town Clerk's office. The crumbling arch over the entrance to what was known as "St. George's Yard" was removed in 1845–6, affording the present commodious passage into the Market.[i] The old "George and Dragon" Inn, razed in 1855, stood on the same ground as

[h] "Ancient Streets and Homesteads of England," p. 28, from which the accompanying illustration is taken.

[i] Formerly known as St. George's Market.

the present handsome block of buildings in Bridge Street. In the same year Lawton Street was widened. Antrobus Street was opened to the public about the year 1844. Duke Street was improved and materially widened in 1869 by the removal of a portion of building formerly used as a Mechanics' Institute and other premises. Within the last six or eight years several new structures have been raised in the town and neighbourhood. Notable amongst these are the handsome premises recently built and now occupied by the Manchester and Liverpool District Banking Company, the Co-operative Society's Stores, the Independent and Unitarian Chapels. Generally speaking, the whole of the borough is characterised by a clean, neat, and rather quaint appearance, its streets well paved, lighted, and drained. The frequent cases of rare longevity testify to its sanitary and general healthy arrangements; beyond which it is additionally favoured in the possession of an excellent water and gas supply.

The old MARKET CROSS, depicted elsewhere, represents the remains of two and possibly three structures. At the present time it is carefully preserved within the grounds of Mrs. John Johnson, by whose late husband's father, Mr. William Johnson, (a careful and intelligent antiquary) the scattered remains were brought together. In an old MS. it is stated that an earlier cross erected *circa* 1500 was decorated with the national and borough arms, "and was gilded and very much beautified." A new cross was erected in 1707, and was removed in 1772, "the same being considered a nuisance."

1653 Pd John Swayne for work done at the dyall before the Crosse ... 3 13 0
1654 Paid to Mr. Tobias Parnell for gould to gild upon ye crosse ... 0 1 6
(*Town Accounts.*)

On Roman Remains.

IN the time of the celebrated Dr. Stukeley occurred frequent discussion whether there ever existed a Roman station at or near Congleton, what information anent the matter the author has been able to gather is set forth in the following pages.

The Romans, during their victorious march northwards, allotted this portion of Cheshire to Agricola and his Legion, who visited Manchester about A.D. 79, arranged its defences and those of the neighbouring districts.[a] From Manchester the Roman road led direct to Buxton, by way of Stockport and Bramhall: a cognate road from Kinderton to Buxton passed through Twemlow, Old Withington, Chelford, Capesthorne, Prestbury, Butley, Bollington, and Rainow.

Shrewd Camden, when writing his Britannia about the years 1584–5, had further reasons than the identity of the first syllables in the two words for his conjecture that Congleton was the Condate of the Tenth Iter of Antoninus. The vast tracks of woodland then existing, the adjacent forests of Macclesfield and Leek, the mountainous aspect and the plentiful supply of water, suggest at once a place fully eligible for Roman occupation; and, doubtless, the old Kentish antiquary knew well the various Roman roads and fortifications spread over the several

[a] Heginbotham's "Stockport Ancient and Modern," vol. i. page 7.

districts of which he wrote. In his Itinerary,[b] writing of the Dane, he says: "The Dan, or Daven, springs from the mountains which separate this County from Staffordshire on the east side, and runs, without any increase to *Condate*, a town mentioned in Antoninus, and now corruptly nam'd Congleton."

Based on Camden's assertion, Congleton, therefore, continued to enjoy the fame of being the seat of this great station until the discovery of the fine Roman camp at Kinderton, near Middlewich, by Dr. Whitaker, the great Manchester historian, who at once named it the long lost Condate.[c]

On the western side of Cloud Hill are the remains of a British Hill Fort, which Dr. Sainter, F.G.S., eminent as a geologist, thus carefully describes:[d] "On proceeding directly northwards from the Bridestones[e] towards the summit of Cloud Hill, the remains of a British hill fort, with its usual rampart and fosse may be noticed. What is left of this portion of the entrenchments extends in an oblique curve 790 feet in length, bearing due west to south-east. How far the fosse may have extended in this direction there is nothing to show, but part of another entrenchment, 180 feet in length, is observable, which denotes that the fortress has consisted of two divisions. At the north-western angle there is part of another entrenchment, which extends due south for a distance of 285 feet, accompanied by a gradual curve of 36 feet, bearing south-east; and this appears to have been the greatest breadth of the camp in this direction, although it will have become narrower when carried any further."

The ancient Britons mostly chose mountainous positions for their military encampments, with wells or rivers within easy access. The fort just described would be unassailable at least on two sides, and the plentiful springs of gushing water with which

[b] Britannica, 2nd edition, by Gibson, vol. i. page 676.

[c] Whitaker's "History of Manchester," 4to edition, vol. i. page 99. The real existence of this celebrated Roman station is now assigned to Wilderspool, in Appleton, near Warrington.

[d] "Scientific Rambles," p. 32.

[e] Situated on the road between Rushton and Congleton, consisting of several huge unhewn freestones, so placed as to mark a Kistvaen, are the BRIDESTONES. "Distinguished by this name is a Monument, hoary with age, whose appearance is so characteristic that no reasonable doubt can exist of its Celtic origin. After the lapse, it may be, of more than two thousand years, and despite the hands of the despoilers, enough yet remains to attest its original purpose, and to distinguish it as the burial place of some Druid Priest or aboriginal British Chieftain, whose very dust is gone."—*Astbury Old Parish Magazine*, Jan. 1874.

this millstone grit abounds would amply supply the camp with that indispensable element. Therefore, without much reasonable doubt, it may be inferred that these precipitous heights, centuries ago, were the scene of some fierce conflict of which history has left no trace. It may be, that driven in fear of their lives to these hills, armed with javelin and pointless sword, their woad-tattooed bodies girt with chain and shield, the ancient inhabitant would crowd to defend this their last stronghold against the victorious invaders. About two bow shots from the fort is the rock called "Catstones," and this too supplies another trace of what has been described. Dr. Sainter remarks the word "cat" or "eath," which is Celtic, means either a place of battle, or the site of graves.

Of the existence at the commencement of the present century of a Roman camp at a place called Hulme Walfield, there is very forcible evidence, though the position of the exact site can but be conjectured. The only records extant relating to its existence contradict the supposition that the tumulus now to be seen could have been attached to the old Roman fort.

Hulme Walfield, which is a little township to the north of Congleton, derives its name, Walfield, (Scandinavian) from the existence of this camp. Until of late years but little mention and no details relating to its formation have been forthcoming, and it is owing to the research of Mr. Earwaker, the learned historian of East Cheshire, that we now possess a full description as found a century and a half ago by Dr. Foote Gower, of Chester. These particulars, now reproduced from Mr. Earwaker's paper on Roman remains in the eastern parts of Cheshire[f] were discovered by him among the old MSS. of Dr. Gower.[g]

The following is a literal copy of the description of the Wallfield camp taken from the Gower MSS.:

[f] Read before the members of the Lancashire and Cheshire Historic Society, 22 March, 1877.

[g] Dr. Gower occupied the greatest portion of his life in collecting material for a new History of Cheshire. The prospectus of this material was published in 1771, but the History itself never appeared. Dr. Gower died *circa* 1790, when his MSS. after passing through several hands, eventually fell by the auctioneer's hammer, half to the British Museum and half to the Bodleian Library. Richard Gough, the topographer, writes of this Chester Antiquary: "Cheshire may boast thee for her true-born son." Vol. 2, "Palatine Note Book," contains an interesting account of his life and bibliography.

"In June, 1725, having been attending Mrs. Wynne of Congleton, in a dangerous illness, I received information that there were some banks and ditches at a place called Wallfield, which might be very well worth my notice. As the distance from Congleton I found was inconsiderable, I accordingly took the necessary directions and went in pursuit of this intelligence. It proved to be what I suspected from the first, a very regular, and, in many parts of it, a very complete fortification of the Romans. The situation of it was near the principal farmhouse, and the angles of it rather than the sides fronted the cardinal points of the compass. The extent of it might, perhaps, include about sixty statute acres. And though the fosse and vallum were in several places a good deal defaced, yet in others they were extremely conspicuous, and might be traced with the greatest ease along the entire line of the encampment. The form of it appeared to be a perfect parallelogram, and towards the middle of the two longest sides there were the evident marks of two military roads, pointing one way to Astbury and the other to Middlewich."

The second record from the same MSS. written nineteen years after, describes the unfortunate change wrought during that period of time.

"Attending a patient in Congleton, in the month of July, 1744, and accidentally inquiring into the state of the banks at Wallfield, I was informed that a new tenant had nearly levelled them with the ground. Being desirous, therefore, of seeing these alterations, I immediately went over, and, to my great concern, found that the information was strictly true. The scene was entirely changed from what it had been almost twenty years before. Ancient grandeur had given place to modern innovations. Both the vallum and fosse were vanished, the former being thrown into the latter; and the only angle that remained had more the appearance of a common bank than any essential part of a vast fortification. The military roads had been entirely and industriously destroyed. And, in short, overspread as the land was with a fine crop of corn, I might in vain have sought for this Roman Station, if I had not been positively certain as to the exact situation of it. The single name of Wallfield was now the only criterion left to establish the certainty of its original condition. So, too, the adjoining village of Astbury implies a borough or fortress, which had an eastern situation with regard to this grand and memorable encampment."

It will be observed that the discrepancy in this account in its identification with the district of Hulme Walfield precludes any definite solution as to the site,[h] one having an eastern situation,

[h] Mr. Earwaker suggests the possibility of its being discovered at Wall Hill, a small place situated due west of Astbury, on the Brereton and Middlewich roads. I have however carefully examined this locality without finding any indication of what is here mentioned.

and the other being almost due south. The ground in the locality in several places is such that might have had an encampment placed there: the tumulus near what is known as the Brick-house Farm, and where Dr. Sainter avers a Roman weapon was found, being of very remarkable formation: its apex forming almost a quadrilateral with an area of some 20 by 40 yards.

In conclusion, reference must again be made to the Paper so frequently referred to in this chapter, where, alluding to the actual existence of Roman Remains in Congleton mentioned in a small work published in 1731,[1] it is stated, that eighteen years previously some remains described as Roman, and subsequently, five large empty jars, small at the top and bottom, of like character, were discovered at the bridge end of the town.

[1] "A New Survey of England," by N. Salmon, LL.B.

HIGH STREET EARLY IN THE 18TH CENTURY.
From a pen and ink Drawing in the possession of MRS. J. JOHNSON.

Norman and Manorial History.

PRIOR to the Conquest, Congleton was the possession of one Godwin, a thane of Saxon blood: who, on the death of King Canute, (1035) became Earl of Wessex. Shrewd and ambitious, holding the fairest and richest counties in southern and central England, Godwin proved no mean rival to the house of Leofric, the first Saxon Earl of Chester, whose descendants, headed by Alfgar, became formidable candidates for the lands which Godwin held. Godwin's conciliatory tactics, however, in dealing with the people, made him the greatest power in England; whereby he enabled his son Harold to usurp the crown without disturbance or opposition.

More than eight hundred years have elapsed since William the Norman anchored his military fleet off Pevensey. Still fresh from the field of Val-ès-dunes his knightly followers were eager to win for him the crown which Harold had sworn to help him to obtain. Within the shadows of Senlac the high altar of Battle Abbey repeats the story of 1066, when Harold the Second was slain, and William Count of Normandy became Conqueror and King of England. Not without violent opposition did William retain his crown, and the complete subjugation of the whole country within a few years was not accomplished without much bloodshed and dire destruction of property. Foremost in opposition was young Edgar Atheling, whose efforts to

supplant the Conqueror were strenuously supported by the Earls of Mercia and Northumbria. In 1068–9 Edgar excited the Northumbrians to revolt and unite in one last struggle to drive out the Norman intruder: while Swegen, King of Denmark, reached the Humber to dispute with William his right to the crown. The whole country at once arose. Shrewsbury, says *Odericus*, the ancient writer, was besieged by men of Wales and Cheshire, while the new Norman castle at York, had 3000 of its soldiers slain. The news of this massacre reached William while hunting in Dean Forest, who swore to exterminate by fire and sword those who thus defied his rule. He first relieved Shrewsbury, laying waste the whole Welsh border, and from thence marched to York. And now began those acts of devastation and bloodshed which left the whole country a mass of waste and ruin. "The work of plunder, slaughter, and conflagration commenced on the left bank of the Ouse, and successively reached the Tees, the Wear, and the Tyne."[a] "Towns, villages, hamlets, and scattered habitations throughout Northumbria, were reduced to ashes: all implements of agriculture, carts, ploughs and harrows, were piled on heaps and consumed with fire; the corn was burnt in the granaries, horses, cattle, sheep, were slaughtered in the fields, or at the stalls."[b] This portion of Cheshire suffered equally with Yorkshire; how severely, we have trace in the Norman Survey made soon after, wherein Macclesfield, Gawsworth, Marton, Bosley, North Rode, Brereton and Congleton, are described as *waste*. At Macclesfield the Earl's great manor house was demolished, and at Nantwich an ineffectual resistance made.[c] It is computed that over 100,000 people perished in the famine which followed this memorable, cruel march of the Conqueror and his army.

The Conquest over, Cheshire fell to one Gherbod, a Flemish noble of military repute, whom Sir Peter Leicester describes as having "gallantly behaved himself" during the Invasion. But only for a short period did Gherbod retain his English possessions; being recalled to Flanders, where he was for some time detained, he surrendered them again into the hands of the King.

In the train of William came his nephew Hugh d'Avranches, commonly called Hugh Lupus, son of the Viscount of Avranches,

[a] Lingard's "England," vol. i. page 405.
[b] St. John's "Four Conquests," vol. ii. page 335. [c] Hall's "Nantwich," page 14.

in Normandy, by the Conqueror's half-sister Emma, upon whom the King now conferred the Earldom of Chester, granting him the whole County by the regal tenure, "to hold to him and his heirs as freely by the sword as the King held the crown of England." By this grant Chester became possessed of all the privileges and immunities of a Palatinate.

Near the close of 1086 Domesday Book was completed, wherein Congleton is thus described.[d]

In Mildestvich Hundret.	In Mildestvich Hundred.
Isdem Bigot tenet COGELTONE. Godwinus tenuit. Ibi i. hida geldabilis. Terra est iiii. carucatæ. Ibi sunt iiæ. cum ii. villanis et iiii. bordariis. Silva ibi i. leuvâ longa et unâ lata et ibi ii. haiæ. Wasta fuit et sic invenit. Modo valet iiii. solidos.	The same Bigot[e] holds COGELTONE. Godwin held it. There is i. hide rateable to the gelt.[f] The land is iv. carucates. Two are [*in the demesne*], with ii. villeins[g] and iv. bordars.[h] There is a wood i. league long and the same broad, and there are two hays. It was waste, and so [*the Earl*] found it. It is now worth iv. shillings.

Thus Bigot, lord of the extensive fee held under Alford, received from the hands of Hugh Lupus the possessions which had been wrested from the House of Godwin, including amongst others, Congleton, Sandbach, North Rode, and Siddington. The original little village of Congleton, it is conjectured, spread over two carucates, held in demesne by Bigot, comprising in extent as much land as two teams of oxen might plough in one year. The two carucates mentioned as a subdivision of the four,

[d] "Translation of the Domesday Book of Cheshire and Lancashire," by Wm. Beamont, Esq., page 48.

[e] Mr. Yates quotes Hugo de Mara as holding Congleton in the Domesday Record, which blunder seems to have been perpetuated almost to the present time. Much land was held by him, amongst which I notice Church Lawton, Bosley, Marton, Somerford, and Buglawton.

[f] A tax on land, such as the obnoxious Danegelt.

[g] Usually came of an ancient house, though of common descent; and was attached to the land and person of the lord, who might sell or dispose of him at will.

[h] A person holding a small portion of land and a cabin, or rude dwelling house; in return for which he supplied poultry, eggs, &c. for his lord's table.

it is thought, were the adjoining districts of Eaton and Hulme Walfield, which, subsequent to the Conquest, became distinct vills, their tenure having reference to Alford,[i] of whose lords Bigot was the ancestor.

The hide of land liable to pay taxes would contain from 20 to 120 acres; or as then specified, sufficient to support a free family.

A portion of Bigot's numerous estates, which he acquired at the Conquest, afterwards formed the ancient fee of Alford. Of this extensive fee, created probably about the year 1130, Congleton, until the close of the thirteenth century, was a dependency. The fee of Alford, so called from its position near a fordable part of the river Dee, where its castle stood, as described in the Harleian MSS. and other deeds, included estates in the several hundreds of Macclesfield, Broxton, Northwich, Bucklow, and Edisbury: the districts in the immediate neighbourhood being, Gawsworth, North Rode, portion of Hulme Walfield, Eaton, Alderley, and Siddington. These were held by the lords of Alford, descendants of Bigot, until *circa* 1220. In the time of Henry II. the lord of this fee was Robert de Alford, who married Mary, daughter of Richard Fitz Eustace, fifth baron of Halton:[j] to this barony Congleton eventually became annexed. Richard de Alford, the next lord, held his possessions *in capite* from the Earl of Chester. About the year 1220, the fee and castle passed to Sir John de Arderne, who, it is presumed, married the daughter of Richard de Alford.

Sir John de Arderne, the ancestor of the Cheshire Ardernes was the younger son of Eustace de Arderne, of Watford, co. Northamptonshire, to whom, about this time, Randle Blundeville, sixth Earl of Chester, granted (or confirmed the grant of) the whole fee of Alford, in Broxton hundred.[k]

Sir Walkelyn de Arderne, succeeded his father before the year 1238. Through his marriage with the daughter and heiress of Philip de Orreby he inherited, among others, the manors of Alvanley and Upton.[l] He died about the year 1268, when his estate passed to his son, Sir Peter de Arderne, under the title of lord of Alford and Alvanley, who in the 53rd Henry III. granted the manor of Congleton to his eldest son, John de

[i] Ormerod's "History of Cheshire," (Helsby's edition) vol. iii. page 562.
[j] *Ibid* vol. ii. page 754.
[k] Earwaker's "East Cheshire," vol. i. page 462.
[l] *Ibid.*

Arderne, who succeeded him, and his wife, Margarey, daughter of Griffin ap Madog, lord of Broomfield.[m]

It was probably during the life of this Sir John that the manor of Congleton passed from the Arderne family to the rich and powerful barons of Halton, with whom it remained until the death of the fifteenth and last baron, Henry Bolinbroke, who ascended the throne as Henry IV.

The Barons of Halton.

A BRIEF glance at the history of these knightly men, gleaned, for the most part, from Mr. Beamont's scholarly work, the *Castle of Halton*, and some old MSS. may possibly not be out of place here. Halton was one of eight or more baronies created by Hugh Lupus, the Norman Earl, who appointed his cousin and comrade Nigel first lord baron, with a grant of "nine Knights' fees[a] and a half." The peculiar distinction allotted to the Barons of Halton was the service of leading the vanguard of the Earl of Chester's army whenever he marched into Wales. At Halton, near Runcorn, Nigel erected his great feudal castle, as a stronghold for that portion of the county. Hugh Lupus further signalised his partiality for Nigel by appointing him Constable of Chester and his own Marshal, with jurisdiction "that if any man did commit theft, robbery, murder, or any such like offence, the bailiffs of the said Nigel should apprehend them, and bring them to his castle of Haulton, and presenting them at three court days at Chester, should the third time let them go free, unless there were any man that would speak against them."[b] Amongst the Congleton Records are many items relating to the transfer of prisoners to Halton, of which the following have been selected from the periods when Sir John Savage and his son were its Seneschals and Constables.

[m] Earwaker's "East Cheshire," from Harleian MSS. 2079, folio 15.

[a] A Knight's fee contained as much land as would maintain him, and enable him to present himself and his retainers ready equipped for the field in times of emergency. Cox's "History of a Parish," page 18.

[b] Ormerod's "History of Cheshire," (Helsby's edition,) vol. i. page 125.

1591	To Harry Sharmon for his charges to Halton wyth the constable to brynge Thomas Wagge	o	1	8
1596	payd John Vardon the Constable for brynging one Horton a felone to Halton & for his horse & one to goe with hym	o	6	8
1598	Imprimis payd wch was spent at London by Mr. Grene & Mr. Haworth in Michellmas terme concernyng the libertyes of our towne and the lybertyes of Hulton	11	o	o
1601	Payd for wyne bestowed upon Mr. Norcott deputye Steauard of Hulton	o	4	3
1601	Payd wydowe Stubbes for wyne when Sir John Savage & the lord Keeper's sonne were here	o	8	7
1603	Payd the constable for brynging James Badylye prysoner to Halton for speekynge words agaynst the Kyng's ma'tie	o	7	6
1635	Mendinge Rood Lane against the coming of Lord Savage's corps[a]	o	1	6

(*Town Accounts.*)

Nigel, the first baron of Halton, it is presumed was the son of Count Ivo, of Constantine, in Normandy. He distinguished himself in the wars with the Welsh, from whom he captured the castle of Rhuddlan for his Earl-chief. He died *circa* 1078, and was succeeded by his son,

William Fitz Nigel, the second baron, possessed much land in this part of Cheshire. He married the daughter of Gilbert de Gant of Flanders.

William Fitz William, in whom ended the male line of Nigel, the first baron, succeeded his father in the year 1135. Dying without issue the Honour of Halton was divided with his two sisters, Agnes and Maud. Agnes married

Eustace Fitz John, who became fourth baron of Halton. He was slain in Wales about the time of Henry II., and was succeeded by his son,

Richard Fitz Eustace, the fifth baron; who married Albreda, daughter of Robert de Lizours, and heiress to the de Lacys, whose surname he subsequently assumed. He died *circa* 1172, when his son

John Fitz Richard, the founder of Stanlau Abbey, became sixth baron of Halton. The king entrusted to him the government of Ireland, which office he soon relinquished, afterwards sailing to the Crusades, where he fell at the Siege of Tyre, in 1190. He married the sister of William Maundeville, by whom he had Roger, Eustace, and Richard.

Roger, for his daring, surnamed "Hell," assumed the name of Lacy; this seventh baron, who died 1211, married Maud de Clare, by whom he had,

[a] He died in London 16 Dec. 1635, and his body brought through Congleton on the way to the Savage Chapel in the Old Church at Macclesfield.

John Lacy, who succeeded him as eighth baron of Halton, and Constable of Chester. He married first, Alice, daughter of William de Aquila, (by whom he had no issue) at whose death he married Margaret, daughter of Robert de Quency, Earl of Winchester. Robert de Quency married Hawys, sister and co-heiress of Randle Blundeville, Earl of Chester and Lincoln, and thus the Earldom of Lincoln passed to the de Lacy family. John Lacy died about the year 1240, and

Edmund Lacy, his son, became ninth baron of Halton. He married Alice, daughter of the Marquis of Saluces, in Italy; and at their nuptials, (Mr. Beamont says) the King was present. From this marriage the celebrated Henry de Lacy was born, who succeeded to the barony at the death of his father in 1258.

Henry de Lacy, tenth baron of Halton, Constable of Chester, and afterwards Earl of Lincoln, became perhaps the most illustrious of his line. At an early age, from the royal hand of Henry III. he received knighthood; and in the time of Edward II. he was made protector of the realm in the king's absence during the conquest of Scotland.

Within the period 1271–2 the manor of Congleton passed from the family of Arderne to Henry de Lacy as parcel of the barony of Halton, who, within the same year, gave Congleton its first great Charter, making the ville a free borough, and conferring privileges and immunities of great importance upon its burgesses. A translation of this Charter, the original of which is preserved among the Corporation Records, appears in the chapter on Charters, Grants, &c.

Despairing of male issue, Henry de Lacy surrendered all his lands to the king, who re-granted the same for life to him and his heirs, with conditions set forth in the following Record,[d] which illustrates how the manor eventually passed to the Duke of Lancaster, and thence to the crown:

Edward by the Grace of God &c. Greeting Know ye that since our beloved and faithful Henry de Lacy Earl of Lincoln and Constable of Chester hath granted and quit claimed to Us for himself and his Heirs all his Castles Lands &c. in Lancashire Cheshire &c. with sundries in Yorkshire with all Lands which Alice de Lacy his mother holds as her dower in the County of Lancaster and which at her death

[d] Record of the Duchy of Lancaster (now in the Public Record Office) recited in the Letters Patent of Charles II., dated 10 March, 1661-2. In the possession of the Corporation.

should return to him and his heirs to have and to hold to us and our Heirs together with Knights Fees Advowsons of Church &c. That we for his Laudable Services have given granted and by this Charter have confirmed for us and our Heirs to the said Earl all his Castles Lands and Tenements aforesaid to have and to hold to the said Earl and Heirs of his body begotten. And so that if the said Earl shall die without Heirs of his body begotten then after the death of the Earl himself and his Heirs aforesaid all his Castles Lands and Tenements may remain to Edmund our dear brother and his Heirs for ever.

Henry de Lacy's first wife was Margaret, daughter of William Longespée, by whom he had four children; Alice, who married Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, son of Edmund, the king's brother, alone surviving him. For his second wife he married Joan, daughter of Lord Kaimes, who, 5 Edward II. had livery of dower of all his lands and tenements *inter alia* in Congleton, of the yearly value of £15 4s. 0d.[e] The Earl died at his London residence in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields,[f] 5 Feb. 1310; and was buried (so writes Mr. Beamont) in St. Paul's, under a magnificent tomb on which was laid his figure representing a cross-legged Knight in link mail.

Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, cousin-germain to the king, through his marriage with Alice de Lacy, became the eleventh baron of Halton; and Congleton, as parcel of that barony, became thus allied to the great house of Plantaganet. The unfortunate Thomas was beheaded for treason at his own castle of Pontefract, 22 March, 1322; and most of his wife's possessions seized by the king.[g]

Henry, afterwards Earl of Lancaster, Edmund's second son, succeeded his brother Thomas. This twelfth baron appears to have died about 19 Edward III., when his son

Henry, Earl of Derby, subsequently called "the good Duke of Lancaster," succeeded as thirteenth baron. In his *Quo Warranto* he claims his town of Congleton as a free borough. The following is an extract of this record:[h]

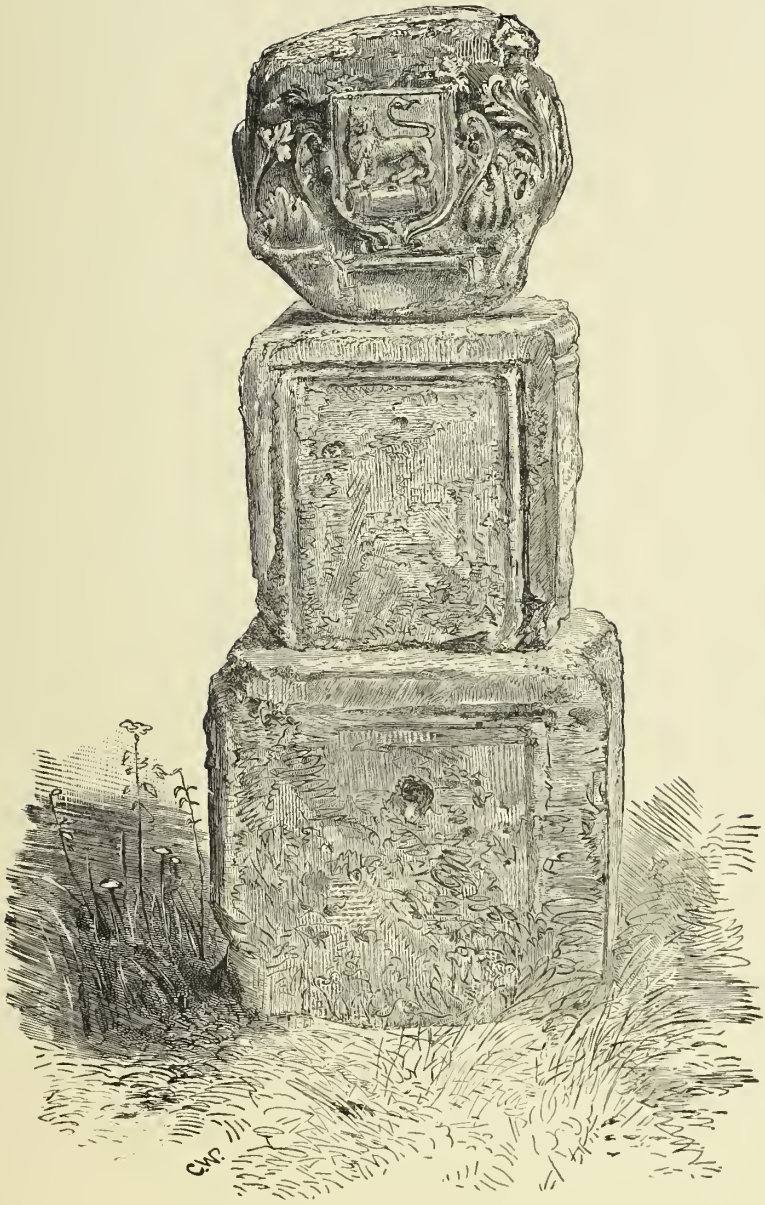
Henry Duke of Lancaster, Constable and Marshall of Chester and Lord of the Manor of Halton &c. claims to hold his Village of Congleton a free borough ("*Burgum*") and to have there free burgesses

[e] Cheshire Plea Rolls.

[f] So called after his earldom.

[g] Alice de Lacy's wealth, it is said, realized over 10,000 marks per year.

[h] From a *Quo Warranto* in Latin, printed by Sir Peter Leycester in his Antiquities; and an Exemplification by Charles II. from Edward III. and Richard II. (in the possession of the Corporation).



Remains of the old Crosses.

and that he himself and his burgesses aforesaid shall be quit of Toll, Passage, &c. &c. whether in the City of Chester or throughout the whole of the County of Chester, exeept toll of Salt in the Wyches &c. And to have there one Market weekly on the Saturday, and one fair there annually viz: on St. Martin's day in the Winter, with all liberties and profits which to the Market or fair pertain &e. And to have their View of Frank pledge and whatever pertains to view of all tenants and residents within the borough aforesaid. To be held three times in the year, namely, once between the feasts of St. Michael and St. Martin in the Winter, and again between the feasts of St. Hilary and the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and a third time between the feasts of the Holy Trinity and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and to have there cognizance of pleas &c.

Henry, Duke of Lancaster, on the death of Alice, his uncle's widow, became Earl of Lincoln. He married the daughter of Lord Beaumont, by whom he had two daughters, Matilda and Blanche. The latter married

John, Earl of Richmond, third surviving son of Edward III., who succeeded Henry, Duke of Lancaster, as fourteenth baron. Known as John of Gaunt, "time-honoured Lancaster," this great statesman and soldier received confirmation of his possessions both from Edward III. and Richard II.

Henry of Bolinbroke succeeded his father 1340. He was the fifteenth and last baron of Halton, subsequently ascending the throne as Henry IV. He died 20 March, 1412.

The combined Arms of the Counties of Lancaster and Chester,
As used by the Record Society.

Manorial History, (continued).

WITH the last of the barons of Halton the manor of Congleton passed to the crown as parcel of the Duchy of Lancaster, under which it appears to have remained to *temp* Charles I. The king, by Letters Patent dated 25 Sept. 1628,[a] did upon the humble petition recomendacon and request of the Mayor, Cominalty and Cittizens of the city of London, give and grant unto Edward Ditchfield, John Highlord, Humphrey Clarke and Francis Moss, their heirs &c. amongst other things the manor of Congleton. It was held of the manor of Enfield, co. Middlesex, the annual rent payable to the king being £8 10s. 7¼d. It is probable that the above-mentioned persons represented the Corporation of the city of London, to whom enormous grants appear to have been made, almost a whole Roll book being devoted to them.

The same Edward Ditchfield and others, by Indenture, 28 Oct., 1629,[b] sold the manor of Congleton with all its rights to Sir Thomas Fanshaw, Knight, of Barking, Essex; John Bramhall, of Rippon, co. York, Bachelor of Theology; and William Bramhall, of London, gent., for £409 13s. 9d., and the

[a] Patent Roll, 2484, M. 1, (Record Office).
[b] Close Roll, No. 2808, 16, (Record Office.)

usual sum of 10s. It included Rent of Assize of £31 7s. 4½d., also £2 4s. 4½d., annual rent, together with Quarries, Fisheries, &c. To hold the same to the said William Bramhall and his heirs for life. The family of Bramhall, sometimes spelt Bromhall, were of the county of York; Bishop Bramhall of Londonderry at that time, being brother to this William. The bishop, it has been said, owned Lands in Congleton, and as shewn by a Royal Composition Paper,[c] it was reported that William Bramhall was not the rightful owner, but only a cover to keep the estate from sequestration for the delinquency of the said Bishop. This however could not be so, the manor being sold to William to hold to him and his heirs for ever. This William (as purchase money) had borrowed from one Matthew Bateson, of London, Skinner, the sum of £800, acknowledging a Statute for the same. This Statute was extended in 1649, and a certificate in Chancery given June 27, 1649.

By an Inquisition taken at Congleton in August of the same year,[d] owing to the sequestration of certain lands therein, laid on for the recusancy of one Mary Bailey, widow, it was found that the said William Bramhall was seized of the manor of Congleton, and that afterwards by virtue of a Liberate out of the Chancery Court of 28 Nov. 1649, the manor was delivered over to Matthew Bateson, to hold the same until the said sum of £800 was paid. About this time a fee farm rent payable out of the manor, of £38 10s. 7¼d. was sold by Thomas Coke and others, Commissioners, to Henry Brooke, of Norton,[e] who in 1652 granted the same to Thomas Warburton.

How long Bateson retained possession does not appear. By a Fine dated 10 August, 1st James II. (1685) Anna Walter, Spinster, appears as plaintiff, and Sir James Graham, Knight, Lady Isabella his wife, and Jane Toxteth widow, defendants, of two parts of the manor of Congleton in three parts divided, and of 40 messuages and 60 acres of land in Congleton.[f]

Subsequently passing to the Rawdon family, it was conveyed by Indentures of lease and re-lease, June 11 & 12, 1745, by Sir John Rawdon, Bart., and Helena his wife, to Peter Shakerley, Esq., lord of the manor of Somerford-with-Radnor.

The family of Shakerley, who take their name from the manor of Shakerley, co. Lancaster, rank among those of the

[c] First series, vol. vi., p. 773, (Record Office).
[d] *Ibid.*
[e] Aug. Deeds of Sale. B. 4. No. 21, (Record Office).
[f] *Ibid.*

most ancient and worthy of Cheshire, their descent, through the Grosvenors, being traced further than the Conquest. At an early period, through marriage, they obtained the manor of Hulme, co. Chester; and *circa* 1700 the manor of Somerford passed by purchase from the Oldfields into their possession.

In 1790 the estates passed to Charles Watkin John Shakerley, Esq., of Somerford and Shakerley. He died 20 Sept. 1834, and was succeeded by his son and heir, Charles Peter Shakerley, Esq. who was Sheriff of Cheshire, 1837: and created a baronet, 1838. He was twice married, and by his second wife, Jessie Matilda, daughter of James Scott, Esq., of Rotherfield Park, co. Hants, Charles Watkin Shakerley, and a daughter, Gertrude, were born.

Sir Charles Watkin Shakerley, Bart., C.B., the present lord of the manor, succeeded to the estate at the death of his father, 14 Sep., 1857. He married July 14, 1858, Georgiana Harriott, eldest daughter and co-heiress of George Holland Aekers, Esq., of Moreton Hall, co. Chester. He was Sheriff of Cheshire 1863.

The Grosvenor and Shakerley Pedigree, here given, is reprinted from Mr. Helsby's edition of Ormerod's *History of Cheshire*, with further additions and corrections courteously afforded me by Lady Shakerley, of Somerford Park, and Geoffrey J. Shakerley, Esq., of Butterton Hall, co. Stafford.

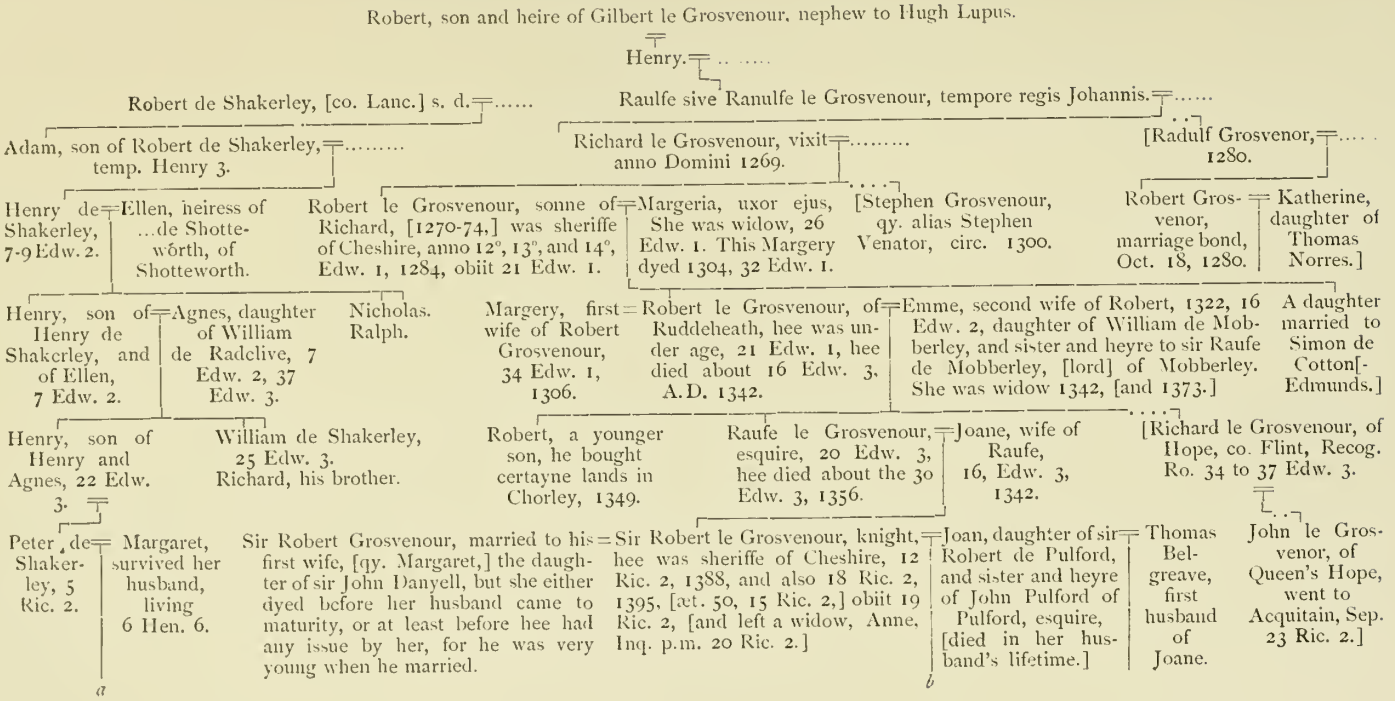
Ancient Arms of Grosvenor—Azure, a bend or.

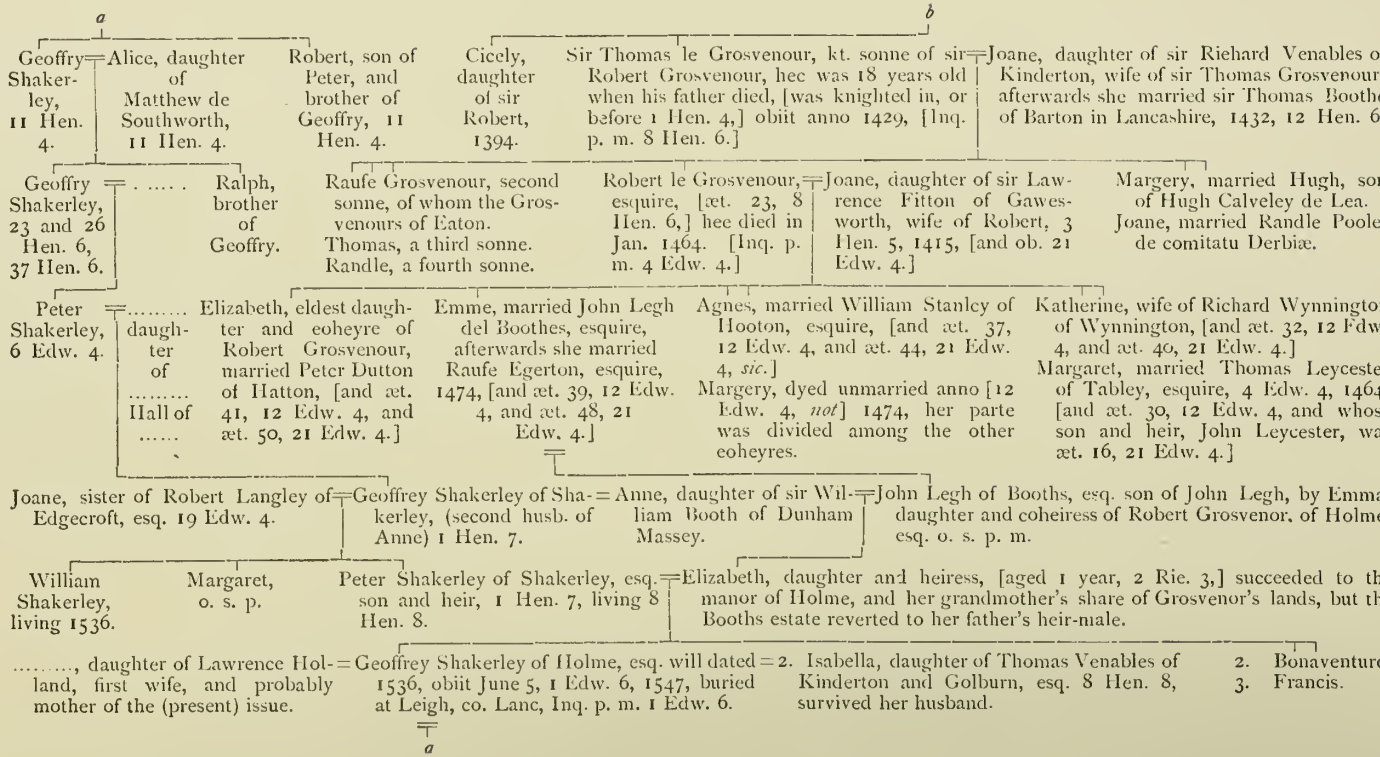
Arms assumed by Sir Robert Grosvenor *temp.* Richard II.—Azure, a garb or.

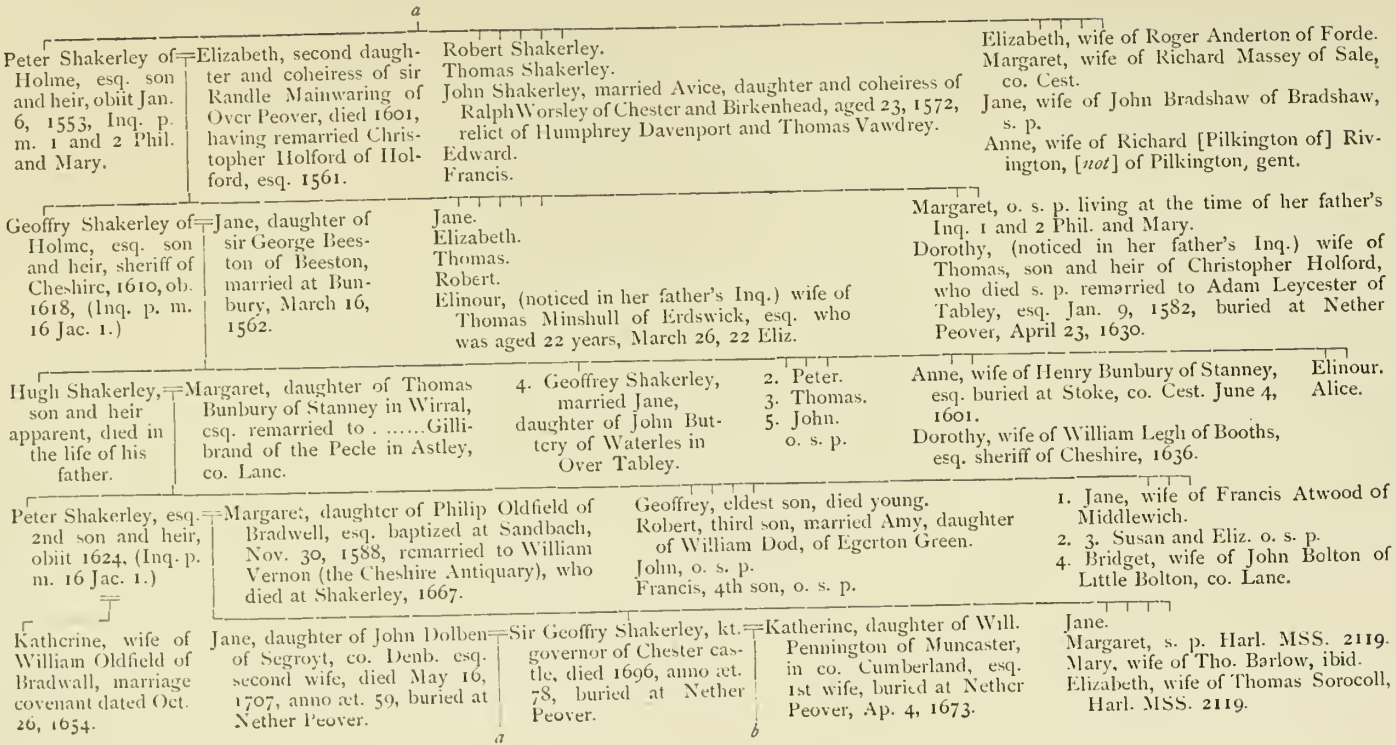
Arms of Shakerley—Argent, a chevron vert between three hillocks of the second.

Crest—A hare proper, resting her fore-feet on a garb or.

GROSVENOR of Hulme, and SHAKERLEY of Shakerley, Hulme, and Somerford.




a
b
Geoffry Shakerley, 11 Hen. 4.
Alice, daughter of Matthew de Southworth, 11 Hen. 4.
Robert, son of Peter, and brother of Geoffry, 11 Hen. 4.
Cicely, daughter of sir Robert, 1394.
Sir Thomas le Grosvenour, kt. sonne of sir Robert Grosvenour, hec was 18 years old when his father died, [was knighted in, or before 1 Hen. 4,] obiit anno 1429, [Inq. p. m. 8 Hen. 6.]
Joane, daughter of sir Richard Venables of Kinderton, wife of sir Thomas Grosvenour, afterwards she married sir Thomas Boothe of Barton in Lancashire, 1432, 12 Hen. 6.
Geoffry Shakerley, 23 and 26 Hen. 6, 37 Hen. 6.
. . . . .
Ralph, brother of Geoffry.
Raufe Grosvenour, second sonne, of whom the Grosvenours of Eaton.
Thomas, a third sonne.
Randle, a fourth sonne.
Robert le Grosvenour, esquire, [æt. 23, 8 Hen. 6,] hee died in Jan. 1464. [Inq. p. m. 4 Edw. 4.]
Joane, daughter of sir Lawrence Fitton of Gawesworth, wife of Robert, 3 Hen. 5, 1415, [and ob. 21 Edw. 4.]
Margery, married Hugh, son of Hugh Calveley de Lea.
Joane, married Randle Poole, de comitatu Derbiæ.
Peter Shakerley, 6 Edw. 4.
..... daughter of ..... Hall of .....
Elizabeth, eldest daughter and eoheyre of Robert Grosvenour, married Peter Dutton of Hatton, [and æt. 41, 12 Edw. 4, and æt. 50, 21 Edw. 4.]
Emme, married John Legh del Boothes, esquire, afterwards she married Raufe Egerton, esquire, 1474, [and æt. 39, 12 Edw. 4, and æt. 48, 21 Edw. 4.]
Agnes, married William Stanley of Hooton, esquire, [and æt. 37, 12 Edw. 4, and æt. 44, 21 Edw. 4, *sic.*]
Margery, dyed unmarried anno [12 Edw. 4, *not*] 1474, her parte was divided among the other eoheyres.
Katherine, wife of Richard Wynnington of Wynnington, [and æt. 32, 12 Edw. 4, and æt. 40, 21 Edw. 4.]
Margaret, married Thomas Leycester of Tabley, esquire, 4 Edw. 4, 1464, [and æt. 30, 12 Edw. 4, and whose son and heir, John Leycester, was æt. 16, 21 Edw. 4.]
Joane, sister of Robert Langley of Edgecroft, esq. 19 Edw. 4.
Geoffrey Shakerley of Shakerley, (second husb. of Anne) 1 Hen. 7.
Anne, daughter of sir William Booth of Dunham Massey.
John Legh of Booths, esq. son of John Legh, by Emma, daughter and coheiress of Robert Grosvenor, of Holme, esq. o. s. p. m.
William Shakerley, living 1536.
Margaret, o. s. p.
Peter Shakerley of Shakerley, esq. son and heir, 1 Hen. 7, living 8 Hen. 8.
Elizabeth, daughter and heiress, [aged 1 year, 2 Ric. 3,] succeeded to the manor of Holme, and her grandmother's share of Grosvenor's lands, but the Booths estate reverted to her father's heir-male.
....., daughter of Lawrence Holland, first wife, and probably mother of the (present) issue.
Geoffrey Shakerley of Holme, esq. will dated 1536, obiit June 5, 1 Edw. 6, 1547, buried at Leigh, co. Lanc, Inq. p. m. 1 Edw. 6.
2. Isabella, daughter of Thomas Venables of Kinderton and Golburn, esq. 8 Hen. 8, survived her husband.
2. Bonaventure.
3. Francis.
a


a
Peter Shakerley of Holme, esq. son and heir, obiit Jan. 6, 1553, Inq. p. m. 1 and 2 Phil. and Mary.
Elizabeth, second daughter and coheiress of sir Randle Mainwaring of Over Peover, died 1601, having remarried Christopher Holford of Holford, esq. 1561.
Robert Shakerley.
Thomas Shakerley.
John Shakerley, married Avice, daughter and coheiress of Ralph Worsley of Chester and Birkenhead, aged 23, 1572, relict of Humphrey Davenport and Thomas Vawdrey.
Edward.
Francis.
Elizabeth, wife of Roger Anderton of Forde.
Margaret, wife of Richard Massey of Sale, co. Cest.
Jane, wife of John Bradshaw of Bradshaw, s. p.
Anne, wife of Richard [Pilkington of] Rivington, [not] of Pilkington, gent.
Geoffry Shakerley of Holme, esq. son and heir, sheriff of Cheshire, 1610, ob. 1618, (Inq. p. m. 16 Jac. 1.)
Jane, daughter of sir George Beeston of Beeston, married at Bunbury, March 16, 1562.
Jane.
Elizabeth.
Thomas.
Robert.
Elinour, (noticed in her father's Inq.) wife of Thomas Minshull of Erdswick, esq. who was aged 22 years, March 26, 22 Eliz.
Margaret, o. s. p. living at the time of her father's Inq. 1 and 2 Phil. and Mary.
Dorothy, (noticed in her father's Inq.) wife of Thomas, son and heir of Christopher Holford, who died s. p. remarried to Adam Leycester of Tabley, esq. Jan. 9, 1582, buried at Nether Peover, April 23, 1630.
Hugh Shakerley, son and heir apparent, died in the life of his father.
Margaret, daughter of Thomas Bunbury of Stanney in Wirral, esq. remarried to . .....Gillibrand of the Pecle in Astley, co. Lanc.
4. Geoffrey Shakerley, married Jane, daughter of John Buttery of Waterles in Over Tabley.
2. Peter.
3. Thomas.
5. John.
o. s. p.
Anne, wife of Henry Bunbury of Stanney, esq. buried at Stoke, co. Cest. June 4, 1601.
Dorothy, wife of William Legh of Booths, esq. sheriff of Cheshire, 1636.
Elinour.
Alice.
Peter Shakerley, esq. 2nd son and heir, obiit 1624, (Inq. p. m. 16 Jac. 1.)
Margaret, daughter of Philip Oldfield of Bradwell, esq. baptized at Sandbach, Nov. 30, 1588, remarried to William Vernon (the Cheshire Antiquary), who died at Shakerley, 1667.
Geoffrey, eldest son, died young.
Robert, third son, married Amy, daughter of William Dod, of Egerton Green.
John, o. s. p.
Francis, 4th son, o. s. p.
1. Jane, wife of Francis Atwood of Middlewich.
2. 3. Susan and Eliz. o. s. p.
4. Bridget, wife of John Bolton of Little Bolton, co. Lane.
Katherine, wife of William Oldfield of Bradwall, marriage covenant dated Oct. 26, 1654.
Jane, daughter of John Dolben of Segroyt, co. Denb. esq. second wife, died May 16, 1707, anno æt. 59, buried at Nether Peover.
Sir Geoffry Shakerley, kt. governor of Chester castle, died 1696, anno æt. 78, buried at Nether Peover.
Katherine, daughter of Will. Pennington of Muncaster, in co. Cumberland, esq. 1st wife, buried at Nether Peover, Ap. 4, 1673.
Jane.
Margaret, s. p. Harl. MSS. 2119.
Mary, wife of Tho. Barlow, ibid.
Elizabeth, wife of Thomas Sorocoll, Harl. MSS. 2119.
a
b

George Shakerley of Holme and Gwersyllt, born Sep. 12, 1682, died Feb. 2, 1756, anno æt. 73, buried at Nether Peover. = Ann, youngest daughter of sir Walter Bagot of Blythefield, co. Stafford, born Feb. 28, 1678, died at Gwersyllt, July 25, 1767, aged 89 years, buried at Nether Peover. [a]

John, a twin brother of George. born Sep. 12, 1682, died May, 1709, s. p.

Peter Shakerley of Holme, esq. governor of Chester castle. o.s.p. 1726, having settled his estates on his half brother George. = Elizabeth, daughter of sir Tho. Mainwaring of Over Peover, bart. [b]

Geoffrey, 2nd son, s. p. m. married Frances, daughter of Francis Keynell of the island of Nevis.

Anne, wife of Chas. Hurleston of Picton, esq. buried at Plemondstall, and mentioned on a monument there. Had issue.

Katherine, o. s. p. 1672.

1. Geoffrey Shakerley, esq. son and heir, born at Gwersylt, Oct. 2, 1706, died June 20, 1733. = Anne, dau. and co-heiress of John Hurleston of Newton, esq. remarried to lord Kilmorey.

2. Peter Shakerley, second son and heir, born at Gwersylt, April 30, 1709, died Oct. 14, 1781, buried at Astbury, married March 13, 1766..... daughter of ..... Morris of Twickenham, second wife, who died s. p. = Ann, dau. of John Amson of Lees, esq. first wife, married July 27, 1737, buried at Astbury.

3. John, born at Gwersylt, Ap. 1, 1711, died at Shrewsbury, Feb. 15, 1725—6.

4. Geo. Shakerley, in holy orders, born at Gwersylt, March 21, 1715—16, o. s. p.

1. Jane, born at Gwersylt, May 7, 1708.
2. Anne, born at Gwersylt, May 12, 1710, s. p.
3. Katherine, born at Gwersylt, Feb. 8, 1712—13, died July 27, 1714.
4. Elizabeth, born at Gwersylt, March 19, 1713—14, died June 21, 1721.
5. Mary, born at Gwersylt, Dec. 10, 1717, died Nov. 10, 1733, s. p.
6. Frances, wife of sir Watkin Williams Wynne, bart. marr. July 16, 1748, o. s. p. (in London, perhaps) Ap. 19, (but *not*) 1750, (but 1803, and bur. at Rhuabon.)

Ann, died Jan. 10, 1735-6, aged three years and nine months.

Charles Buckworth, esq. sometime a lieutenant in the Royal Navy British Fuzileers, afterwards of Park Place, Bishopsgate Heath, co. Berks, died at Staines, Aug. 22, 1783, will proved at Chester, Oct. 17, 1783. = Eliza, daughter and sole heiress, by survivorship, married March 20, 1764, marriage settlement dated March 18 preceding. Executrix of her husband's will 1783.

A daughter, died young.

Charles Watkin John Buckworth, esq. of Somerford, co. Cest. and Shakerley, in the co. of Lancaster, esq. (born June 15, 1767,) assumed the name of Shakerley (in lieu of Buckworth,) by act of parliament 1790, sheriff of Cheshire. 1791, (ob. Sep. 20, 1834.) = Dorothy, daughter of John, Moreland, esq. of Copplethwaite, in co. Westmoreland. [a]

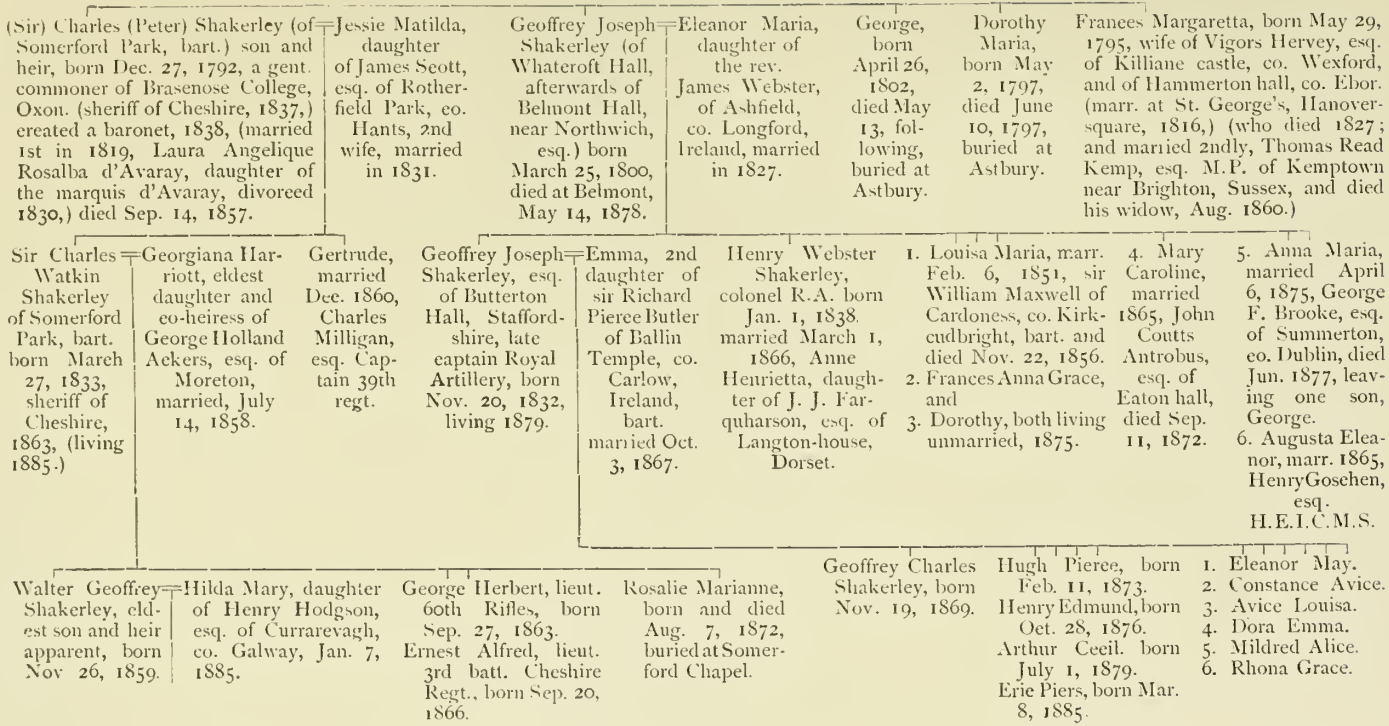
Frances Margaretta Buckworth, (born May 22, 1766,) died unmarried about 1804.

Anna Maria Buckworth, (born April 23, 1765.

Geoffry Buckworth, (born Nov. 29, 1773, ob. March 17, 1774.)

Joseph Francis Buckworth, (born Jan. 30, 1770,) lieut-col. of the 1st Royal Chester Militia, married Mary, dau. of sir Philip Monoux of Sandy, co. Bedford, (bart.) widow of sir John Payne, bart.

Peter Everard Buckworth of Somerford, (and Englefield Green, co. Surrey) captain 40th foot,) (born Aug. 11, 1768,) married Julia daughter of sir Thomas Blackhall of Dublin, kt. (and had issue.)


(Sir) Charles (Peter) Shakerley (of Somerford Park, bart.) son and heir, born Dec. 27, 1792, a gent. commoner of Brasenose College, Oxon. (sheriff of Cheshire, 1837,) created a baronet, 1838, (married 1st in 1819, Laura Angelique Rosalba d'Avaray, daughter of the marquis d'Avaray, divoreed 1830,) died Sep. 14, 1857.
Jessie Matilda, daughter of James Scott, esq. of Rotherfield Park, co. Hants, 2nd wife, married in 1831.
Geoffrey Joseph Shakerley (of Whateroft Hall, afterwards of Belmont Hall, near Northwich, esq.) born March 25, 1800, died at Belmont, May 14, 1878.
Eleanor Maria, daughter of the rev. James Webster, of Ashfield, co. Longford, Ireland, married in 1827.
George, born April 26, 1802, died May 13, following, buried at Astbury.
Dorothy Maria, born May 2, 1797, died June 10, 1797, buried at Astbury.
Frances Margaretta, born May 29, 1795, wife of Vigors Hervey, esq. of Killiane castle, co. Wexford, and of Hammerton hall, co. Ebor. (marr. at St. George's, Hanover-square, 1816,) (who died 1827; and married 2ndly, Thomas Read Kemp, esq. M.P. of Kemptown near Brighton, Sussex, and died his widow, Aug. 1860.)
Sir Charles Watkin Shakerley of Somerford Park, bart. born March 27, 1833, sheriff of Cheshire, 1863, (living 1885.)
Georgiana Harriott, eldest daughter and co-heiress of George Holland Aekers, esq. of Moreton, married, July 14, 1858.
Gertrude, married Dec. 1860, Charles Milligan, esq. Captain 39th regt.
Geoffrey Joseph Shakerley, esq. of Butterton Hall, Staffordshire, late captain Royal Artillery, born Nov. 20, 1832, living 1879.
Emma, 2nd daughter of sir Richard Pierce Butler of Ballin Temple, co. Carlow, Ireland, bart. married Oct. 3, 1867.
Henry Webster Shakerley, colonel R.A. born Jan. 1, 1838. married March 1, 1866, Anne Henrietta, daughter of J. J. Farquharson, esq. of Langton-house, Dorset.
1. Louisa Maria, marr. Feb. 6, 1851, sir William Maxwell of Cardoness, co. Kirkcudbright, bart. and died Nov. 22, 1856.
2. Frances Anna Grace, and
3. Dorothy, both living unmarried, 1875.
4. Mary Caroline, married 1865, John Coutts Antrobus, esq. of Eaton hall, died Sep. 11, 1872.
5. Anna Maria, married April 6, 1875, George F. Brooke, esq. of Summerton, co. Dublin, died Jun. 1877, leaving one son, George.
6. Augusta Eleanor, marr. 1865, Henry Gosehen, esq. H.E.I.C.M.S.
Walter Geoffrey Shakerley, eldest son and heir apparent, born Nov 26, 1859.
Hilda Mary, daughter of Henry Hodgson, esq. of Currarevagh, co. Galway, Jan. 7, 1885.
George Herbert, lieut. 60th Rifles, born Sep. 27, 1863.
Ernest Alfred, lieut. 3rd batt. Cheshire Regt., born Sep. 20, 1866.
Rosalie Marianne, born and died Aug. 7, 1872, buried at Somerford Chapel.
Geoffrey Charles Shakerley, born Nov. 19, 1869.
Hugh Pierce, born Feb. 11, 1873.
Henry Edmund, born Oct. 28, 1876.
Arthur Cecil, born July 1, 1879.
Erie Piers, born Mar. 8, 1885.
1. Eleanor May.
2. Constance Avice.
3. Avice Louisa.
4. Dora Emma.
5. Mildred Alice.
6. Rhona Grace.

Charters, Grants, &c.

CONGLETON is rich in its beautiful collection of Muniments, very ancient and valuable, consisting of a consecutive series of Records, which extend over a period of more than six hundred years. It is a matter of surprise and much congratulation that these oldest documents have been so well preserved, or, indeed, that they now exist at all, considering that until of late years they had been but loosely kept, and in no recognised repository. In 1874 the entire collection was entrusted to Mr. Turner, of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, who skilfully set up the complete translations with which they are now furnished. The chronological arrangements were by Mr. J. P. Earwaker, under whose care and direction the old Deeds and Charters were neatly mounted, with their translations placed opposite to each. They now form a library of some thirty large folio volumes, handsomely bound in dark morocco, with the town arms emblazoned on either side, and comprise the following:[a]

Three volumes of Charters and other Deeds dating from the time of Edward I.;[b] one volume of Charters of the fourteenth and fifteenth

[a] The setting up cost the town over £150.

[b] Three vols. of Statutes, dating from *temp* Henry III. to 1845, were destroyed by a fire which broke out at the Town Clerk's Office, 29 Nov. 1877.

centuries;[c] four volumes of the old Mayor's Accounts, from 1584 to 1736; one volume, inscribed "Inquisitions, Paines, Orders and By-lawes taken, sett, made and agreed upon at the Courtes of the Mannor of Congleton from the 32nd of Henry VIII. to the 17th of James I.";[d] several volumes of Order or Minute Books, dating from 1554 to the present time; two volumes of Miscellaneous Papers, containing much valuable information; one volume, a Collection of Records from 1572 to 1820, made by the Rev. Jonathan Wilson, sometime Master of the Grammar School; volumes of Court and Sessions Books, from 1705 to 1854, Acts of Parliament, and Treasurer's Accounts; one long parchment Roll, containing the Boundaries of the Lordship of Congleton, made in 1593, 1662, and 1673.[e]

CHARTER OF HENRY DE LACY.[f]

Let present and future people know that We Henry de Lasey Earl of Lincoln and Constable of Chester have given conceded and by this our present Charter have confirmed for us and our heirs to our free burgesses of Congulton that the aforesaid Town shall be a free Borough and our Burgesses of the same borough shall have for evermore a Merchant Guild[g] with all the liberties and free customs to the same Guild belonging. Also they (the said Burgesses) shall have housebote[h] and haybote and common of pasture for all their beasts and Cattle everywhere in our territory of Congulton with abundant fuel and without hindrance from any one on our part when they need it as by digging drying and taking Turves and peats anywhere in the Turbary[i] of Congulton. And that they shall be quit of Pannage[j] for as many pigs as they shall have within the bounds of Congulton. And that by pretext of the Charter of concession and confirmation of the liberties of our burgesses which we have from the Lord the King they shall be freed for ever throughout all places in Cheshire whether by land or by water under the defence and protection of ourselves and our heirs with all their Merchandise from Toll Stallage[k] Passage[l] Pavage[m] Pontage[n] Lastage[o] and Murage[p]

[c] Presented to the town by Dennis Bradwell, Esq., in 1878.

[d] This is a Transcript from the original copy, which by some unknown chance is contained in the Bodleian Library. [e] Preserved in a box by itself.

[f] Translated by the Rev. Jonathan Wilson, sometime Master of the Grammar School, of whom more will be said in the account of that institution, and elsewhere.

[g] This was a brotherhood or company of merchants in any town, who as a body held the trade of the town exclusively in their own hands, with power to prevent all others from selling, except at fair times.

[h] Housbold and Haybold, or Housebote and Haybote, meaning timber for the erection of houses, sheds, and hedges. [i] Privilege to dig turf.

[j] The right of feeding swine on the mast in the lord's woods.

[k] Money demanded from those erecting stalls and booths in street or market.

[l] A Toll demanded from those passing through any particular town or liberty, extending in some cases to passage by water.

[m] Money paid for breaking the soil or pavement to drive posts into the ground for the support of stalls.

[n] Toll demanded on bridges. [o] Toll levied on goods sold by the last or load.

[p] Money demanded from strangers passing through the gates of a walled town or place.

and from all other impeachments which affect Merchandise except from reasonable amends if they do transgress. And that they shall not be impleaded nor judged of any plea for their lands or tenements nor of any plea which "*sonat in transgressione*" done within the limits of the town aforesaid without their own proper borough. And if any of them fall in our amercement before judgment for default it shall not exceed 12d. and after judgment reasonable amercement according to the extent of the trespass. And that they may grind their corn at our Mill at Congulton to the twentieth grain provided the Mill is sufficient. And that our burgesses aforesaid may choose to them by themselves a Mayor and eatchpole and taster of ale and shall present them openly in our great court there the Tuesday next after the feast of St. Michael and our bailiff shall take their oath of faithful service to the Lord and Community. Also we will and concede for us and our heirs and assigns that the aforesaid Burgesses their heirs and assigns may have and hold their Burgages and the lands to the Burgage belonging and also the lands within the said Lordship which can be reasonably appropriated and rented by the oaths of the aforesaid Burgesses without hurt of their liberty and of their common aforesaid peaceably and quietly for ever viz. every burgage for 6d. yearly and every acre of land for 12d. at the usual rent terms of the said town. And that they shall make at our Court three appearances annually on certain days. Yet when the writ "*de recto*" is running in the said Court they shall make suit from fortnight to fortnight for every other kind of service and demand. And that they may lawfully sell give Mortgage or otherwise alienate at their Will except to religious Persons their burgages and lands aforesaid. And that the Bailiffs of the said town if they have caught any Felon in a known Felony may lawfully behead him and if the felony be unknown to hold him for three days if they will in the stocks and afterwards deliver him to our Castle of Halton with the Chattels found with him saving to them the "Pelfe" which pertains to the serjeant. And we the aforesaid Henry and our heirs will warrant acquit and for ever defend all the aforesaid liberties burgages lands and tenements with appurtenances &c. with free usages of the town to the aforesaid Burgesses their heirs and assigns against all nations. In witness whereof to this present Charter we have appended our seal. These being Witnesses John Deyville, William de Vavasour, Robert de Stokeport.[q] Geffry de Chedle,[r] Knights, Richard de Rode, Gralam of Tideby, Bertram de Saxeby, Vincent de Wombwell, Gervase the Clerk, and others.

In the Plea and Recognizance Rolls, 15 and 16 Henry VIII. is an Inspeximus and Exemplification of this Charter, the privileges of which were confirmed in most of the subequent

[q] Robert de Stokeport, the 3rd Baron of Stockport of that name. He died in 1272. This Charter must then have been granted some time before the close of that year. Bishop Gastrell in his *Notitia Cestriensis* mentions the date as 10 Edward I.

[r] Son of Geoffrey de Dutton, he died *circa* 1294.

Charters granted to the town. The Guild Merchant, with all its liberties and free customs, described by Lord Coke[s] as made to the end that good order and government may be preserved for the advancement of trade, largely increased the markets and commercial transactions of the inhabitants. In 10 Edward I. (1282) Henry de Lacy founded a weekly market in Congleton, held on Saturdays, and a yearly fair held at the feast of St. Peter *ad vincula* and five days following.[t]

GRANT OF COMMON OF PASTURE.

William, the son of Robert de Pulford, by Charter concedes to all the Burgesses of the Town of Congleton and the whole community of the said Town common of pasture for their animals of any kind, as they were accustomed to have without any impediment or disturbance within these limits viz. from "*les Threlowes*" upon the underwood of Wallefeld descending in a line as far as to the hedge of Asshecroft and so following the said hedge as far as the outward ends of his bounds towards Congleton and there commencing at the north part of the aforesaid "*les Threlowes*" going in a line as far as "*in Merlache*" where the way which leads from Yeyton [Eaton] Castle and Merlache adjoins, and so following Merlache as far as the bounds of the town of Congleton. To hold the same to them and their heirs for ever. These being witnesses, Sir Hugh de Aldelegh then Justiciary of Chester, Richard de Fouleshurst, then Sheriff of [the county] Chester, Sir Simon Tuschet, William de Vener, [*sic*] Richard de Morter, [Morton] Randle de Astebury, Richard the Clerk and others. *Temp* Edward I.

CHARTER OF HENRY VI.

By Charter dated at Gloucester (1430) the King concedes and gives his license that there shall be one annual fair in the town of Congleton, namely, in the vigil and feast of the Apostles Philip and James and on the morrow of the same feast, besides the one other fair there held at the feast of St. Martin in the winter. These being witnesses, the Venerable fathers John Archbishop of Canterbury, &c.; Chancellor H. Winton, our brother; and H. Sarum, our treasurer; Edward Duke of York, John Earl of Somerset, and others.

The first named fair, now held annually on the 12th of May, for the sale of horses and cattle, is the principal one of the year, and the only one recognized as a pleasure fair, which is kept up for two or three days. The other fairs are: Thursday before Shrovetide, called "Goodtide" or "Goodit" fair; the 13th of July, called the "Cherry fair"; and the 22nd of November, (St. Martin's, as above.)

[s] A Report, page 125.

[t] Harl. MSS. 2074, 202.

LETTERS PATENT OF HENRY VI.

The King, by Letters Patent dated at Croydon the 29 June, 29th of his reign, (1451) recites that it has been shown by the Mayor &c. of Congleton that by the impetuous and fluctuating flow of the stream of the River Dane, a great part of the town has become devastated and the King's Mills within his lordship are dilapidated &c. to the great hurt and perpetual destruction of the said town. The King on the supplication of the Mayor and Community being favourably inclined concedes and licenses that the said Mayor &c. may change the course from its ancient place as far as and above another course "*fundum*" called Biflete within the said Lordship so that the water may for ever be able to run there, and to construct one, two, or three water, wind, or horse mills. Also that the said Mayor &c. may hold the said Mills so constructed for 10 years without rent. After which time they may hold the same for ever at a rent of 26/8 annually.

GRANTS FROM HENRY VIII.

The King, in the 23rd year of his reign exempts the inhabitants from appearing at Chester, or "Countyes, Eyrs, Hundreds, Shireff's Tornes, or Courts, for any maner of cause contrary to their sayed Cherter &c." *An Injunction* from the same King, addressed to his well beloved cousin, the Duke of Buckingham, the same year, enjoins that no other Mill be erected within the Lordship of Congleton, nor in any wise suffered to grind on any part of their stream, and that the inhabitants should grind their grain at the town's mill, and at none other. Given from the Palace at Westminster, 30th of his reign.

The same King, in his Letters Patent, tested at Westminster, 20 June, in the 34th year of his reign, recites the de Laey Charter, and confirms the same at the instance of Robert Spencer, Mayor.

The above Exemption was confirmed by Queen Elizabeth and James I. Among the town Muniments is an interesting letter (in French) written by John Pelham, Steward of the Duchy of Lancaster, conveying notice of this exemption, to which privilege, Congleton, as parcel of the fee of Alford, was entitled under the Charter of Randle Blundeville.

PRIVILEGES GRANTED BY ELIZABETH.

By her Letters Patent dated at Westminster, the 23rd day of January, 1583-4, the Queen reconstructs the body corporate to be henceforth known as "the Mayor and Commonalty," by which name they were to enjoy perpetual succession, to receive and possess lands, and to grant the same to whom they chose. That they were to have a common seal for transacting official business, with power to alter the same at their pleasure. That they were to implead and be impleaded, to make bye-laws or private statutes for the better

government of the town, with power to enforce their observance. That the new Mayor should be "our beloved Richarde Greene," gentleman, to whom and the inhabitants and their successors the Mills were confirmed, paying yearly the sum of twenty-six shillings and eightpence. *A Mandamus* from the same Queen, dated at Westminster, 21 June, in the 27th year of her reign, (1585), decrees that the inhabitants of Congleton shall be free of Toll in all Markets and Fairs in England, under no less a penalty than £100 to be forfeited by the person or persons who shall demand or receive the said toll.

In addition to the foregoing, Queen Elizabeth ratified and confirmed several grants and privileges to the town. In an Exemplification of a Decree given in the 26th year of her reign, it is shown that upon the information of William Stubbs, gent., an action was instituted against Richard Spenser, late Mayor, and the Burgesses of the town, touching the possession of certain lands called the Brownswolds and Byeflat, the Town or Acre Wood, the privilege to fish in the Davon, and power to receive money levied on the sealing of cloth, commonly called Ulnage. Therein is decreed that the said lands which were conveyed in the time of Henry VI. by divers persons in fee to the use of the town, as presumed, by reason of the long possession that they have had, should be occupied and enjoyed by the Mayor and Commonalty of Congleton; who were to pay yearly to the said William Stubbs, her Majesty's bailiff, for the term of nineteen years, certain sums of money for old and new rents; for the like number of years he was to have the fishing of the said river, and the Ulnage or sealing of cloth, with the tolls of the Fair and Market. Dated at Westminster, 16 Feb., in the 26th year of her reign, (1583–4).

LETTERS PATENT OF JAMES I.

By his Letters Patent dated at Westminster, 19 Jan., 1624-5, the King gave the town many new grants and privileges. It describes the town as "exceeding ancient and populous," the same to be for ever a free borough of itself, and the body corporate to be known by the name of "the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Congleton." The new mayor to be Philip Oldfield, Esquire, and the first Aldermen—eight in number, John Hobson, Edward Drakeford, Randle Rode, John Latham the elder, Matthew Holiday, Thomas Parnell, Roger Poynton, and William Newton, who were to retain their office for life, unless displaced for some default. Sixteen "equitable and discreet" freemen were to be elected as Capital Burgesses or Councillors of the borough. The ancient liberties of this body corporate and the privileges granted by Queen Elizabeth were severally

The Seal affixed to Recognizances of Debts under the Statute Merchant, and the Statute of Acton Burnell.

ratified and confirmed, to which were added the power to make further laws for the good government and victualling of the borough. That yearly "on the Monday next before the Feast of St. Michael," an Alderman of themselves should be chosen to be the Mayor for the next year, who should take the oath before the last preceding Mayor to faithfully execute the duties of the office. That on the death of an Alderman, one of the Capital Burgesses should be elected to the vacancy, and another freeman chosen as Capital Burgess. For their "High Steward" they should select "a person of high repute and special eminence," Sir Thomas Savage, Knight and Baronet, to be the first to hold the office; to be succeeded by his son and heir, who should hold the same for life. After his death "one other highly respectable and eminent man" was to be elected High Steward, to retain the office during the pleasure of the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses. They were to have a "Common Clerk," who was to be an "honest and discreet man," Roger Drakeford to be first to hold the office, who in conjunction with the Mayor was empowered to take Recognizances under "the form of the Statute Merchants and the Statute of Acton Burnell."[u]

There were also to be "two Sergeants-at-Mace," one to be chosen by the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses, and to be named "the Catchpole," his duty being to serve all writs, processes, &c.; the other to be chosen by the Mayor alone, and named "the Mayor's Sergeant," his duty was Keeper of the Goal, certain security being taken from him for the safe keeping thereof. The Sergeants-at-Mace were to attend and carry before the Mayor "two silver Maces, gilt, engraven and wrought with the Coat of Arms of the King." That the Mayor and two Alderman (John Hobson and Edward Drakeford) were to be "Justices of the Peace"; the Mayor to take his oath before Sir John Brereton and William Liversage and William Swettenham, Esquires; and the other two before the last and next

[u] So called from the Castle of Acton Burnell, near Shrewsbury, where the Statute was made in the parliament held there in 1283, and which had reference more particularly to debtors in London, York, and Bristol.

preceding Mayor. A "General Sessions or Justiciary of the Peace" was to be held in the borough. In addition to the three Markets or Fairs then existing the profits of which belonged to, and were to be retained by the Duchy of Lancaster, an annual Fair or Market was granted to be held on the Thursday before Quinquagesima Sunday, and the day following, "Goodit" fair, "together with a Court of *Pie Powder*[v]" with all liberties, free customs, toll, &c.[w]

This document, for the many privileges and extent of jurisdiction it confers, is known as the *Magna Charta* of Congleton. It is most voluminous in size, and is richly illuminated with an elaborate border and armorial bearings. The great seal attached is in very good preservation.

LETTERS PATENT OF CHARLES II.

Charles II. by his Letters Patent dated at Westminster, 10th day of March, in the 14th year of his reign, (1662) confirms certain rights and privileges, and recites sundry records by Edward III. and Richard II.

Another Charter or grant from the same king, dated the 19th year of his reign, cost the town upwards of £90, as appears from the Borough Accounts. It confirms certain privileges but grants no new ones.

CHARTER OF GEORGE IV.

George IV. by his Charter dated at Westminster 18th August, in the 6th year of his reign, (1826) enumerates the various rights and privileges enjoyed by the town, and grants power to remove the Market from the public street into the square, where it now stands; but the power was not acted upon until the year 1859.

This weekly Market, first granted by Edward I. to Henry de Lacy, is still held on Saturdays, but since its removal from the High Street, it has perceptibly decreased. In 1859, Sir C. W. Shakerley, lord of the manor, for the benefit of the public, liberally relinquished his right to the tolls.

[v] A special Court for levying the rates of charges for stalls during a fair.

[w] From a translation by the Rev. Jonathan Wilson.

Copy of Deed of Gift of Tolls granted to the Town by Sir C. W. Shakerley, Bart.
(Affixed to the wall of the Butter Market.)

BY THE GIFT

OF

Sir Charles W. Shakerley, Bart.,

ALL TOLLS

Of FAIR and MARKET within this Borough vested in him as Lord of the Manor of Congleton or otherwise were abolished FOR EVER from and after the 1st DAY of JANUARY, 1859.

And at the same Time all Tolls of Fair and Market within this Borough of Congleton vested in the Mayor and Corporation or other the Corporate body of the said Borough of Congleton were abolished for ever from and after the said 1st day of January, 1859. The open ground of this Market is therefore free to all persons who may place their own stalls or baskets thereon for the sale of all goods or wares (except butchers' meat) subject to such rules as to order and situation as the Town Council may from time to time lay down for the convenient management of the Market. No butchers' meat will be allowed to be exposed for sale except upon the fixed stalls or shambles provided for that purpose.

A rent will continue to be charged by the Corporation of Congleton for the use of all stalls or benches of a fixed or permanent character which are now or which may be hereafter placed upon the market ground for the greater convenience of the sellers and the public.

No theatrical exhibition or any exhibition other than of goods for sale can be placed on the Market ground without the consent of the Town Council.

By Order,

CHRIS. MOORHOUSE,

Town Clerk.

The old White Lion Inn, High Street.

Manorial Courts.

THE *Court Baron* was a local court anciently attached to all manors, and usually sat once in every three weeks. In these Courts transfers and surrenders of lands were recorded, all duties and customs received, and cognizance taken of injuries, slanders, debts, &c., where the claim did not exceed forty shillings.

Much importance was attached to the assembling of the *Maior's Court*, or *Court of Assembly*, where, among other duties, master freemen enrolled their apprentices within six months after they were bound, "upon payne of forfayte in not doeynge thereof xs." An Alderman for absence was fined eightpence: and members of the Council "wch doe not come to evrye Maior's Courte or Assembly by tenne of the cloke in the forenoon shall lose theire sevrll fynes as though the[y] came not at all."[a]

Of the Manorial Courts, the *Court Leet* with view of *Frank Pledge* was one of the oldest, being based on the Sheriff's tourn or circuit, which dates from Saxon times. It held the same relative position to the Sheriff's tourn that the petty sessions of the present day hold to the assizes or quarter sessions. In the Plea of Henry, Duke of Lancaster, he claims his right to hold Court Leet[b] at Congleton, with all fines, duties, &c. The Court usually assembled after six days' notice, and commenced its proceedings with the bailiff proclaiming "*Oyez! Oyez! Oyez!* (Hear ye! Hear ye! Hear ye!) All manner of persons who owe

[a] Order Book, 1584, Town Records.

[b] Leet or Lawday.

suit and service at this Court let them draw near and answer to their names, or send their essoins." The names of the burgesses were then twice read over, and fines imposed on those omitting to attend. This was followed by the bailiff's second proclamation—"*Oyez! Oyez! Oyez!* All manner of persons who have any more to do at this Court, let them come and they shall be heard, otherwise they and all others may depart hence, and give their attendance at the adjourned Court."

After the Jury were sworn and empanelled they proceeded to fine non-attenders and those burgesses who, eligible, had omitted to apply for enrolment: also to take the accounts of the officers of the past year, and to give verdicts in cases of complaint, &c. The Mayor for the ensuing year being chosen, it was his privilege to nominate the bailiff, after which the Court proceeded to appoint the following officials:

Sergeant.

Catchpole: (Cachepollus) An inferior bailiff, one that catches by the poll.

Mill Reeves: Whose duty it was to serve out the town's corn, to keep the Mill accounts, and to report any burgess who ground his corn at any but the town's Mill.

Market Lookers: Inspectors of produce, weights and measures.

Searchers and Sealers of tanned leather: Who fined those who disposed of any leather before it was "serched, sealed and regystered."

Curriers, or *Dressers of tanned leather.*

Inspectors of Dealers in tanned leather.

Inspectors or "*Viewers*" *of drapers and mercers.*

Burleymen: "Viewers of such persons as cutt downe quickwood or pull downe hedges and such lyke thynges."

Tender or *Watcher of Town Wood.*

Inspectors of Wells and Streets: Whose duties were to see "that the wells be kept sweete and the streetes be made cleane."

Tender or *Watcher of the Commons.*

Miller.

Keeper of the Town's Box.

Swine Muzzler: His duty was to see all swine "yoked and Rynged accordynge to the Statute in that case made and provyded."

Ale Taster: An officer appointed by the Court to test the quality of bread and strong drink.

At an early period these courts, (now abolished) usually held before the bailiffs of the barons of Halton, became severed from the manor, and appended to the Borough; when they were presided over by the High Steward. This dignitary, who prior to James I., was appointed by the Crown through the Duchy of Lancaster, is now chosen by the Corporation. The earliest Stewards and their deputies, as they appear in the "Forty-third Report of the Deputy Keeper of Public Records," Record Office, London, are here given.

High Stewards.

Dutton, Steward. - - - -	31 & 32 Edward III.
Matthew de Rixton. - - - -	43 & 44 Edward III.
Thomas de Holford. - - - -	22 & 23 Richard II.
Roger Flore. - - - - - -	5 Henry V.
William Gernet; John Savage, Knt. -	4 & 5 Henry VI.
John Savage, Knt. - - - - -	5 & 6 Henry VI.
John Down; Humphrey, Duke of Bokyngham[c] (Stewards) - - - -	29 to 31 Henry VI.
John Warburton, Knt. - - - -	19 to 21 Henry VII.
William Brereton. - - - -	17 & 18 Henry VIII.
William Brereton, Esq.; Edward Newell, Knt.; John Savage, Esq. - - -	27 & 28 Henry VIII.
Edward Neuell, (or Nevell) Knt.; John Savage, Esq. - - - - -	29 & 30 Henry VIII.
Edward Neuell, Knt.; John Savage, Esq.; Peter Dutton, Knt.; William Brereton, Knt. - - - - - - - -	30 & 31 Henry VIII.
Peter Dutton, Knt.: William Brereton. -	31 & 32 Henry VIII.
Peter Dutton, Knt.; John Savage., Esq.	33 & 34 Henry VIII.
John Savage, Esq. - - - -	37 & 38 Henry VIII.
John Savage, Knt. - - - -	1 & 2 Edward VI.
John Savage, Knt.; William Brereton. -	14 & 15 Elizabeth.
John Savage. Knt. - - - -	22 & 23 Elizabeth.
John Savage, Knt.; John Savage, Esq. -	39 & 40 Elizabeth.
John Savage, Knt. - - - -	42 & 43 Elizabeth.
John Savage, Knt. & Bart. - - -	8 & 9 James I.
John Savage, Knt. & Bart. - - -	12 & 13 James I.

[c] He resided at Macclesfield, where still a few ruins of his mansion near Back Walgate may be seen.

By the Letters Patent of James I. Sir Thomas Savage, son of Sir John Savage, was appointed High Steward for life, (see page 38), at his death to be succeeded by his son and heir, John Savage.

John Bradshaw, better known as President Bradshaw, (of whose life more will be found in other pages of this work) was High Steward of Congleton in 1655. The following is the record of a court held at Congleton in that year.[d]

It is ordered the day and yeare above written By the greater part of the Councell that Appeared, That John Bradshaw of the Burroughe aforesaid Esqre learned in the Lawes, Bee continued High Steward of and Counsell ffor the said Burroughe As formerly. And bee paid the same salary quarterly for Counsell As heretofore hath byn paid; And that hee bee Acquainted herewth And his Acceptance thereof desyred. Given a copy hereof by Mr. Maior's Consent unto Mr. Bradshaw, 28 January, 1655.

Jo: Walley [Town Clerk]

The election of Bradshaw appears to have been disapproved of by a portion of the Council, so that he almost directly resigned the office, but refused to deliver up the Court Records and other books belonging to the same, as appears by the following resolution:—"That a demand of the Cort Records and Bookes bee againe made, and in case Mr. Atturney [Bradshaw] doe refuse and deny to give the same up, that then, such speedy corse bee taken to gaine the same." An offer of the office was afterwards made to Lord Savage, "Mr. Atturney Bradshawe Having already given up his interest therein." Another record taken shortly after shews that Lord Rivers was requested to take the office—"That the Earle Rivers hath not answered the expectaeons of this Burroughe in his Aeceptance of the said office of High Steward, notwthstandinge sundry promises by him made &c. It is therefore Ordered by the greater part of the Counceill that Appeared the day and yeare first above written That Humphrey Milton[e] of Wych-malbanke (Nantwich) bee elected High Steward." Thomas, Earl Rivers, however was sworn High Steward that same year, and held the same to *circa* 1693, when his son, Earl Rivers, was appointed. He retained the office till 1727, and was succeeded by James, Earl

[d] Town Records.

[e] Humphrey Milton, gent. held part of the manor of Stapeley, Nantwich. He presided over the Manor Court of Betchton for Roger Wilbraham, Esq., of Townsend. Hall's *Nantwich*, p. 475.

of Barrymore, who was followed by Thomas Furnival, gent., of Hulme Walfield Hall, and John Crewe, jun.

In 1757 Richard Bootle Wilbraham, Esq., of Rode and Lathom, co. Lancaster, was installed High Steward, and retained the office up to his death in 1796.[f] He married Mary, daughter and heiress of Robert Bootle, Esq., of Lathom House, co. Lancaster. Edward Bootle Wilbraham, Esq., the eldest surviving son, succeeded to the Lancashire estates, and was subsequently created Baron Skelmersdale, of Skelmersdale, co. Lancaster.

Randle Wilbraham, his second surviving son, who inherited the Rode and other Cheshire estates, was unanimously chosen High Steward on the death of his father. Being under age, the Rev. Richard Lowndes Salmon was appointed for the two years preceding his majority. Randle Wilbraham, Esq. married Letitia, daughter and heiress of the Rev. Edward Rudd, of Houghton-le-Spring, co. Durham, by whom Randle Wilbraham, his heir, was born. His second wife was Sibylla, daughter of Philip Egerton, Esq., of Oulton. He died Jan. 12, 1861, having held the office for 62 years.

Randle Wilbraham, Esq., the present High Steward, succeeded his father, and has ever evinced the same great interest in the welfare and good government of the borough. He married, Nov. 1833, Sibella, daughter of William Egerton, Esq., of Gresford, co. Denbigh: she died April 4, 1871.

John Wilson, LL.D., is the present Deputy Steward, having held the post for upwards of 25 years.

Election of Mayor.

IN the time of Philip and Mary a dispute concerning the right to elect the Mayor for the borough came before the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. Sir John Savage, Knight, "High Steward of the Honor, Free Manor and Lordship of Halton," complainant on behalf of the crown, against Sir William Brereton, Knight, Richard Green, and others, defendants. Sir William Brereton claimed for the burgesses, as granted in the de Lacy Charter, the right to choose of themselves yearly "one Mayor, one Catchpole, and one Aletaster," which said right was now confirmed by the decree of the Lord

[f] He was M.P. for Chester from 1761 to 1790.

Chancellor, declaring that in future only resident freemen should vote in the election of the above officers. The Mayor and the other officers, after their election, to be presented before the High Steward, at the Court of Congleton, "on the Tuesday next after the Feast of St. Michael," to the intent that they may there be sworn and take their oaths of the said Steward, who should give them "good exhortation for good order" to be observed during their year of office.[a]

Under the Letters Patent of James I. (already mentioned) the town continued to be governed until the passing of the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, when the Town Council was remodelled, and now consists of six Aldermen and eighteen Councillors. Of the following list of Mayors the earliest names are taken from Charters and Deeds in the possession of the Corporation, from the Halton Court Rolls, and other documents.

List of Mayors.

1348–9	Richard de Bradocke.[b]	1398	William de Moreton.[e]
1368	Roger de Moreton.[c]	1402–3	Robert del Yate.
Nov. 1375	Roger de Moreton.	1403–4	Randle de Somerford.
1381	Richard de Croddok.[d]	1404–5	William de Moreton.[f]
1384	Ralph Somerford.	1406–7	Hugh de Lathum.*
1385–6	Ralph de Somerford.	1407–8	Hugh de Lathum.
1387	Roger de Moreton.	Oct. 1408–9	Philip del Grene.[g]
1397	Ralph Somerford.	1412–3	Philip del Grene.

[a] A copy of this Decree is in the possession of the Corporation, dated the 2 and 3 Philip and Mary.

[b] Son of Richard de Bradocke. This Richard married Elizabeth, widow of John de Astbury, who (33 Ed. III.) 1359-6, claimed as dower a messuage and nine acres of land in Congleton.

[c] From a Charter by Felicia, daughter of William del Yate, granting certain lands in Congleton to William Alikoc. Dated at Congleton, Monday after the Conception B.V.M., 1368.

[d] Was removed from his office of Mayor, and John de Crodhok elected in his place.

[e] Randle de Moreton, son of Richard de Moreton of Moreton, by his wife Beatrice, is presumed to be the ancestor of the important family of Moreton of Congleton.

[f] On this deed is mentioned "le Mulnestreete (*i.e.* Mill Street) in Congleton."

[g] "The Grenes, an ancient family here, were connected with the town from about the reign of Edward III., and occur down to the sixteenth century in many Charters and Rolls of the Palatinate Courts."—(Ormerod.) A Radulphus Grene, or Grecne, who was Rector of Lawton, 1525, Chaplain of Chadkirk, and Vicar of Prestbury, 1535—1559, was probably of this family.

* From Moreton Deeds. Thomas, son of Hugh de Lathum, purchased lands in Congleton, 5 Henry VI., (1426.)

	1416–7	Hugh de Latham.	1510	Hugh Wagge.
	1420	Philip del Grene.	1511	Hugh Wagge.
	1421–2	Robert del Yate.[h]	Oct. 1512–3	William Brereton,
	1422–3	Philip del Grene.		Esq.
	1423–4	Robert de Arkelyd.	1517–8	Robert Spencer.[i]
	1425	Richard de Moreton.	1518–9	Ralph Rode.*
	1427	Roger de Moreton.	Dec. 1520–1	John Walker.
	1428	John Spenser.	*c.* 1521–2	Ralph Yardeley.
	1433–4	Peter Wilbram.	1527	William Moreton.
	1434–5	Hugh de Latham.	1529	Richard Grene.
	1435–6	Philip del Grene.	1534	John Hobson, jun.
	1436–7	John de Spenser.	1536	Geoffrey Rathebon.
	1437–9	Roger de Moreton.	1537–8	Simon Foxholes.
	1440	Hugh Grene.	Sep. 1539–40	Richard Grene.
	1441	Roger de Moreton.	— 1540–1	Robert Spencer.
	1441–2	John Spenser.	— 1541–2	Richard Grene.
	1444–5	John Spenser.	July 1542–3	Robert Spencer.
	1445–6	Hugh del Grene.	1544	John Davenport, Esq.[j]
	1447–8	Alexander Latham.	1545	William Moreton.
	1448–9	John le Barker.	1549	Richard Grene.
	1449–50	John le Barker.	1549–50	Richard Grene.
Oct.	1450–2	Alexander Lathom.	1552–3	James Rode.
	1452–3	Hugh del Grene.	Sep. 1553–4	James Rode.
	1453–4	Hugh Moreton.	— 1554–5	James Rode.
	1454–5	John Barker.	— 1555–6	James Rode.
	1459	John Spenser.	— 1556–7	Richard Grene.
Apr.	1461	Hugh Grene.	— 1557–8	Richard Grene.
	1463	Hugh Greene.	— 1558–9	William Rode.
	1464–5	Roger Moreton.	— 1559–60	Roger Grene.
	1467–8	William Madiowe.	— 1560–1	Richard Spencer.
	1468–9	Hugh Grene.	— 1561–2	William Thorley.
	1469	Hugh Grene.	— 1562–3	Roger Grene.
	1469–70	John Newton.	— 1563–4	Roger Grene.
	1477	William Smyth.	— 1564–5	Richard Spencer.
	1483–4	William Madiowe.*	— 1565–6	John Hobson.
	1493	Thomas Grene.	— 1566–7	Thomas Comberbach.
	1503–4	William Rode.*	— 1567–8	Roger Grene.

[h] A family owning much property in Congleton during the 15th century.

[i] A James Spenser was Mayor in the time of Henry VII., but I fail to trace the date. Subsequently he became Lord Mayor of London. Dr. Ormerod mentions that by his will Sir James Spenser bequeathed the sum of 10*s.* "towards the building of the new Church at Astbury," (probably meaning the great addition of the centre and south aisle.)

[j] Of Davenport.

* From Moreton Deeds.

Sep. 1568–9	Randle Hankinson.	Sep. 1602–3	John Hobson, sen.
— 1569–70	William Thorley.	— 1603–4	John Hobson, jun.
— 1570–1	Alexander Latham.	— 1604–5	Edward Drakeford.
— 1571–2	Roger Grene.	— 1605–6	John Smyth, sen.
— 1572–3	John Hobson.	— 1606–7	Randle Rode.
— 1573–4	John Rode.	— 1607–8	Randle Rode.
— 1574–5	Randle Hankinson.	— 1608–9	Edward Drakeford.
— 1575–6	Thomas Comberbach.	— 1609–10	John Latham.
— 1576–7	Roger Grene.	— 1610–1	William Drakeford.
— 1577–8	Alexander Latham.	— 1611–2	William Drakeford.
— 1578–9	Alexander Latham.	— 1612–3	Richard Grene.
— 1579–80	John Scragge.	— 1613–4	Henry Haworth.
— 1580–1	Thomas Joneson.	— 1614–5	Henry Haworth.
1581	John Hobson.	— 1615–6	John Hobson.
1582	John Somerford, Esq.	— 1616–7	John Brooke.
Sep. 1582–3	Richard Spenser.	— 1617–8	Matthew Holliday.
— 1583–4	Richard Grene.[k]	— 1618–9	Edward Drakeford.
— 1584–5	Richard Grene.[l]	— 1619–20	Edward Drakeford.
— 1585–6	Richard Spenser.	— 1620–1	Thomas Parnell.[n]
— 1586–7	John Smythe.	— 1621–2	Randle Rode.
— 1587–8	Richard Grene.	— 1622–3	Roger Poynton.
— 1588–9	John Hobson, jun.	— 1623–4	William Newton.
— 1589–90	Matthew Moreton.	— 1624–5	Philip Oldfield.
— 1590–1	John Woulfe.	— 1625–6	James Lingard.
— 1591–2	Richard Grene.	— 1626–7	William Knight.
— 1592–3	William Drakeford.	— 1627–8	Richard Grene.
— 1593–4	John Cresswell.	— 1628–9	John Latham.
— 1594–5	William Stubbs.[m]	— 1629–30	Ralph Wagge.
— 1595–6	Richard Spenser.	— 1630–1	Ralph Wagge.
— 1596–7	John Cresswell.	— 1631–2	Richard Grene.
— 1597–8	Richard Grene.	— 1632–3	Roger Hobson.
— 1598–9	Matthew Moreton.	— 1633–4	Randle Rode.
— 1599–1600	Roger Spencer.	— 1634–5	John Walker.
		— 1635–6	Randle Rode.
— 1600–1	John Hobson, jun.	— 1636–7	William Newton.
— 1601–2	Roger Spencer.	— 1637–8	John Bradshawe. *(the "President.")*

[k] First Mayor under Queen Elizabeth's Charter.

[l] Mayor's Accounts begin, and continue almost without intermission up to the present time.

[m] In the Harl. MSS. (844) is a folio book entitled "Charters and Exemplifications of Orders concerning Congleton." It includes copies from the original documents made in the handwriting of William Stubbs, Mayor of Congleton in 1595.

[n] Thomas Parnell, founder of the influential family of the Congleton Parnells. (See further information in another chapter.)

Sep. 1638–9	Edward Drakeford.	Sep. 1663–4	William Moreton.
— 1639–40	William Knight.[o]	— 1664–5	John Kent.
— 1640–1	John Walker.[p]	— 1665–6	Ralph Hammersley.
— 1641–2	George Ford.[q]	— 1666–7	John Latham.
— 1642–3	John Henshaw.	— 1667–8	Richard Hall.
— 1643–4	George Ford.	— 1668–9	John Walker, jun.
— 1644–5	John Latham.	— 1669–70	William Knight.
— 1645–6	Thomas Spencer.	— 1670–1	Richard Cotton.
— 1646–7	Robert Knight.	— 1671–2	William Newton.
— 1647–8	Richard Parnell.[r]	— 1672–3	William Harding.
— 1648–9	Roger Hobson.	— 1673–4	Robert Hobson.
— 1649–50	John Holliday.	— 1674–5	Peter Lingard.
— 1650–1	John Holliday.	— 1675–6	Thomas Spencer.
— 1651–2	John Buckley.	— 1676–7	Thomas Butcher.
— 1652–3	John Henshaw.	— 1677–8	John Walker.
— 1653–4	Roger Poynton.	— 1678–9	John Smith.
— 1654–5	John Latham.	— 1679–80	Richard Hall.
— 1655–6	Thomas Spencer.	— 1680–1	William Newton.
— 1656–7	Robert Knight.	— 1681–2	William Harding.
— 1657–8	Richard Parnell.	— 1682–3	Robert Hobson.
— 1658–9	Richard Parnell.	— 1683–4	Robert Hobson.
— 1659–60	John Buckley[s] and John Hobson.[t]	— 1684–5	Peter Lingard.
		— 1685–6	Thomas Malbone.[u]
— 1660–1	George Fforde.	— 1686–7	Thomas Spencer.
— 1661–2	John Walker.	— 1687–8	Thomas Wolrich.
— 1662–3	Thomas Higinbotham.	— 1688–9	John Smith.
		— 1689–90	William Newton.

[o] William Knight, tanner, like the two succeeding Mayors, was a stout Royalist. His composition paper, dated 8 March, 1649, shews "that he was in armes for the late King against the parliament." His fine was thirty pounds. Robert Knight, his father, and John Henshaw, Aldermen, "undertake to binde themselves in ye some of sixty pounds." (Vol. 45, folios 137—41.)

[p] John Walker, skinner, compounded as a Royalist for disaffection to the parliament in 1645, and was fined £37. In his composition paper he pleads concession because of his wife and seven small children. (*Ibid* vol. i. folios 73—90.)

[q] George Ford, Mercer. His composition paper is dated 5 March, 1649, wherein appears "that in the first warre he adheared to the party against the p.liament, But not in the second warre." (*Ibid* vol. xlv., folios 129—133.)

[r] "That Aldermen Henshaw, Parnell, Buckley, and Pointon, with Tobias Parnell and four other Councilmen, and Jonathan Walley, town clerk, having refused to take the oaths of allegiance to King Charles II., were removed from their respective offices, and nine persons of loyal character inducted." (Royal Commission at Chester.)

[s] Died June, 1660.

[t] Elected June, 1660. The first "Royalist" Mayor elected after Cromwell's death, despite the interdict excluding all "malignants" from any municipal office.

[u] Father of the Rev. Ralph Malbon, Minister and Schoolmaster.

Sep. 1690–1	John Shaw.	Sep. 1730–1	Thomas Bowyer.
— 1691–2	Robert Hobson.	— 1731–2	John Vardon, jun.
— 1692–3	Robert Knight.	— 1732–3	John Bostock.
— 1693–4	Peter Lingard.	— 1733–4	William Bayley.
— 1694–5	Thomas Malbone.	— 1734–5	Richard Throp.
— 1695–6	John Shawe.	— 1735–6	John Barlow.
— 1696–7	Thomas Wolrich.	— 1736–7	Richard Martin.
— 1697–8	John Vardon.	— 1737–8	John Smith.
— 1698–9	John Cotton.	— 1738–9	John Bostock.
— 1699–1700	John Sydebotham.	— 1739–40	John Vardon, jun.
		— 1740–1	William Bayley.
— 1700–1	Richard Jackson.	— 1741–2	Richard Throp.
— 1701–2	John Markland.	— 1742–3	Richard Martin.
— 1702–3	William Bayley.	— 1743–4	Richard Throp.
— 1703–4	Thomas Beckett.	— 1744–5	John Smith.
— 1704–5	Thomas Wolrich.	— 1745–6	William Poynton.
— 1705–6	William Ferne.	— 1746–7	John Vardon.
— 1706–7	William Gorst.	— 1747–8	John Bostock.
— 1707–8	Thomas Malbon.	— 1748–9	John Drake.
— 1708–9	John Shaw.	— 1749–50	William Bayley.
— 1709–10	Thomas Wolrich.	— 1750–1	Richard Martin.[v]
— 1710–1	William Ferne.	— 1751–2	Richard Throp.
— 1711–2	Thomas Becket.	— 1752–3	Joseph Bramhall.
— 1712–3	John Vardon.	— 1753–4	John Drake.
— 1713–4	John Toft.	— 1754–5	John Clayton.[w]
— 1714–5	Thomas Shaw.	— 1755–6	William Bayley.
— 1715–6	John Jackson.	— 1756–7	Joseph Bramhall.
— 1716–7	William Gorst.	— 1757–8	John Drake.
— 1717–8	Thomas Wolrich.	— 1758–9	Richard Martin.
— 1718–9	Joseph Wood.	— 1759–60	John Clayton.
— 1719–20	John Vardon.	— 1760–1	John Drake.
— 1720–1	Joseph Malbon.	— 1761–2	James Vardon.
— 1721–2	William Amery.	— 1762–3	Joseph Hill.
— 1722–3	Joseph Malbon.	— 1763–4	Richard Webster.
— 1723–4	John Vardon.	— 1764–5	Philip Antrobus.
— 1724–5	Thomas Shaw.	— 1765–6	William Bailey.
— 1725–6	John Barlowe.	— 1766–7	John Drake.
— 1726–7	John Bostock.	— 1767–8	Joseph Hill.
— 1727–8	Samuel Brooke.	— 1768–9	Thomas Yearsley.
— 1728–9	Thomas Kelsall.	— 1769–70	Thomas Brooks.
— 1729–30	William Amery.	— 1770–1	James Vardon.

[v] By whom the spinning of cotton was first introduced.
[w] Formerly of Stockport, (see Trades.)

Sep. 1771–2	Richard Webster.[x]	Sep. 1800–1	James Twemlow.
— 1772–3	John Whitfield.[y]	— 1801–2	John Wilkinson.
— 1773–4	William Ward.	— 1802–3	George Reade.
— 1774–5	Joseph Hill.	— 1803–4	Robert Hodgson.[b]
— 1775–6	Thomas Yearsley.	— 1804–5	John Dean.
— 1776–7	Thomas Vaudrey.	— 1805–6	John Johnson.
— 1777–8	Bowyer L. Wynne.[z]	— 1806–7	Jonathan Broadhurst.
— 1778–9	Thomas Brookes.		
— 1779–80	William Reade.	— 1807–8	John Wilkinson.
— 1780–1	Philip Antrobus.	— 1808–9	Nathaniel Maxey Pattison.
— 1781–2	John Whitfield.		
— 1782–3	Thomas Yearsley.	— 1809–10	Holland Watson.[c]
— 1783–4	Bowyer Leftwych Wynne.	— 1810–1	James Twemlow.
		— 1811–2	John Wilkinson.
— 1784–5	Thomas Brookes.	— 1812–3	Rev. Samuel Williamson.[d]
— 1785–6	William Reade.		
— 1786–7	Nathaniel Maxey Pattison.[a]	— 1813–4	Jonathan Broadhurst.
— 1787–8	Bowyer Leftwych Wynne.	— 1814–5	Thomas Bowers.
		— 1815–6	Jonathan Broadhurst.
— 1788–9	Richard Martin.		
— 1789–90	Robert Hodgson.	— 1816–7	John Johnson.
— 1790–1	Thomas Vardon.	— 1817–8	John Skerratt.
— 1791–2	George Reade.	— 1818–9	Thomas Bowers.
— 1792–3	Thomas Garside.	— 1819–20	Nathaniel Maxey Pattison.
— 1793–4	John Shaw Reade.		
— 1794–5	John Dean.	— 1820–1	Jonathan Broadhurst.
— 1795–6	Joseph Vardon.		
— 1796–7	Nathaniel Maxey Pattison.	— 1821–2	Thomas Bowers.
		— 1822–3	George Reade.
— 1797–8	John Whitfield.	— 1823–4	John Johnson.
— 1798–9	Owen Lloyd.	— 1824–5	John Johnson.
— 1799–1800	Rev. Samuel Williamson.	— 1825–6	Jonathan Broadhurst.

[x] Died during his Mayoralty. Philip Antrobus was his deputy.

[y] See Monuments, St. Peter's.

[z] Of whom is recorded the singular prediction that "Congleton would come to be governed by beggars and outcomers."

[a] See Monuments, St. Peter's; and under Trades.

[b] Brother-in-law of Bishop Porteous. Resided at Moody Hall.

[c] Nephew of the widow of the great Stockport Historian. He settled in Congleton *circa* the commencement of the present century, was made a freeman of the town 19 Sep., 1808. Removed to Liverpool shortly after his wife's death. (See Monuments, St. Peter's.)

[d] He was an American by birth. (See Incumbents, St. Peter's.)

Sep. 1826–7	John Jackson.	Nov. 1858–9	Edward Harrison Solly.
— 1827–8	George Reade.	— 1859–60	Edward Harrison Solly.
— 1828–9	William Lowndes.	— 1860–1	Henry Hogg.
— 1829–30	Charles Gent.	— 1861–2	William Hadfield.
— 1830–1	William Lowndes.	— 1862–3	Joseph Clulow Washington.
— 1831–2	Thomas Hall.	— 1863–4	Joseph Clulow Washington.
— 1832–3	Charles Barlow.	— 1864–5	Benjamin Radley.
— 1833–4	Charles Pedley.	— 1865–6	Benjamin Radley.
— 1834–5	Charles Gent.	— 1866–7	John Latham.
Nov. 1835–6	Samuel Pearson.[e]	— 1867–8	John Latham.
— 1836–7	Thomas Hall.	— 1868–9	Robert Beales.[h]
— 1837–8	John Fielder Reade.	— 1869–70	Robert Beales.
— 1838–9	John Fielder Reade.	— 1870–1	John Dakin.
— 1839–40	John Pickford.	— 1871–2	James Pearson.[i]
— 1840–1	John Andrew.	— 1872–3	James Pearson.
— 1841–2	William Warrington.[f]	— 1873–4	John Kennerley.
— 1842–3	William Hadfield.	— 1874–5	John Kennerley.
— 1843–4	James Broadhurst.	— 1875–6	Dennis Bradwell.
— 1844–5	John Bulkeley Johnson.	— 1876–7	Dennis Bradwell.
— 1845–6	John Pickford.	— 1877–8	Dennis Bradwell.
— 1846–7	Joseph Bullock.	— 1878–9	Charles Goode.
— 1847–8	William Warrington.	— 1879–80	Charles Goode.
— 1848–9	John Andrew.	— 1880–1	Robert Beales.
— 1849–50	William Hadfield.	— 1881–2	Thomas George Sheldon.
— 1850–1	Henry Hogg.[g]	— 1882–3	Thomas George Sheldon.
— 1851–2	Henry Hogg.	— 1883–4	Thomas Cooper.
— 1852–3	Thomas Goode.	— 1884–5	Isaac Salt.
— 1853–4	John Dakin.	— 1885–6	Isaac Salt.
— 1854–5	John Dakin.		
— 1855–6	James Pearson.		
— 1856–7	Richard Low Ginder.		
— 1857–8	Charles William Barlow.		

[e] First Mayor under new Municipal Corporations Act, 1835.

[f] An intelligent local Antiquary, who made numerous memoranda intended for a history of the borough, (now in the hands of Mr. T. G. Sheldon, of Congleton.) See mention in chapter on "Punishments."

[g] Was of Gloucestershire family. He was an active support to the silk trade, and a borough and county magistrate. Died in 1864.

[h] Dr. Beales was of Leicester origin, and a resident of Congleton for 32 years, where he died 3 Feb., 1884, aged 59 years, and was buried beside his second wife in Astbury Churchyard. He was a Borough and County Magistrate, Alderman, and served the office of Mayor three times. The chapter on Congleton in "Nonconformity in Cheshire" is a contribution from his pen.

[i] See Memorial Window, St. James'.

Town Clerks.[a]

Robert Latham.	1421.
John de Arkeled.	1428.
Rich. Greene Senr.	1587.
Roger Drakeford.[b]	1624—56.
Jonathan Walley.	1656—65.
William Spencer.[c]	1665—.
Thomas Spencer.	1670—79.
William Hammersley.	1679—82.
Timothy Leivinge.	1682—86.
John Bourne.	1686—.
Peter Throp.[d]	
Thomas Poole.	1721—5.
John Burgess.	1725—33.
James Ford.[e]	1733—76.
William Smith.	1776—1814.
Christopher Moorhouse.	1814—42.
John Latham.	1842—51.
John Wilson, LL.D.	1851—6.
Christopher Moorhouse.[f]	1856—67.
John Wilson, LL.D. (re-elected[g])	1867—.

Freemen.

THE admission to the privileges of a freeman of the borough was very jealously exercised by the ancient rulers of the town, and the freedom tax, only abolished some sixty years ago, was heavily levied on strangers, particularly tradesmen, whereby the leading inhabitants secured for them-

[a] Anciently the Town Clerk paid ten shillings for his freedom before he was allowed to take office. Coming to modern times that sum was increased to ten pounds.

[b] Appointed by the Letters Patent of James I. (1624-5). He was privileged to take the writing and enrolling of Recognizances of Debts.

[c] Was also Clerk of the Mills.

[d] Died 1721, and was buried at St. Peter's. In the Register his name is side by side with Ra: Malbon, the Minister and Schoolmaster.

[e] Resigned through feebleness produced by great age.

[f] Now Solicitor to the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company.

[g] And is the present Town Clerk.

selves a large monopoly of trade. This is illustrated by the following Extracts taken from the Ancient Court Records.

1584—"Yt is ordered that noe p[er]son beynge a stranger shalbe made free or be suffered to dwell in thys towne or lordshippe eomynge from any place excepte the[y] have a testymonial or certyfeeate of good behavioure, and also to be put in suretyes yf the[y] have chyldren to dyscharge the towne of theire said chyldren." 1667—"Ordered this day that if Joseph Biekerton, Tanner, will bee made A ffreeman of this Burrough hee shall pay for the same 50s.: whieh if hee refuse to doe hee is to bee Stallenged in 5s. A month." 1668—"Ordered this day that if the Apothieary, Mr. Thomas Hoggins, that should come to this towne doe come, hee shall pay for his ffreedome Twenty Nobles." 1669, Sept. 14—"Mrs. Susanna Walker did pay for her ffreedome in this Burrough of Congleton the Summe of five pounds, And if in ease shee ehance to marry, her husband is to bee free of any trade in this Burrough of Congleton for the foresaid five pound[s] already payd, in the prsence of John Walker, Mayor, Richard Cotton and William Newton, Justices, John Latham and John Kent, Aldermen."

The following persons, among many others, appear to have been made honorary freemen, reeeiving the honour as a eomplimentary presentation from the town:

Henrie Haworth, gent. - - - - -	1624.
John Bradshaw. - - - - - -	1632-3.
Thomas Stanley, of Alderley, Esqre. - -	1659.
Thomas Croxton, of Ravenscroft, Esq. - -	,,
Henry Bradshaw, of Marple, Esq.[a] - -	,,
John Brody, ffree Mason. (he paid 2 6) -	1669.
Sir Thomas Middleton, Knight. - - -	29 July, 1670.
Sir Geoffrey Shackerley, Knight. - -	,, ,,
Thomas Cholmondeley, Esq. - - - - -	,, ,,
Charles Mainwaring, Esq. - - - - -	,, ,,
Mr. William Venables, - - - - - -	,, ,,
Mr. Thomas Leigh. - - - - - -	,, ,,
Mr. Peter Wilbraham. - - - - - -	,, ,,
The Hon. Lord Colchester - - - -	24 Oct. 1673.
Willm. Lingard, parish Clerk and Schoolmaster at Astbury. - - - -	3 Oct. 1674.

[a] Brother to President Bradshaw.

Charles Gerard Esq^re^ sonne and heir of the Honble Charles Lord Gerard. - - -	1677.
Sir John Bowyer, Bart. - - - -	20 Sept. 1681.
Charles Richmond Strodder, Captain att Nampwich. - - - - - - -	2 May, 1687.
Richard Leving Esq^re^, Recorder of Chester -	17 April, 1688.
Thomas Thorneycroft Esq^re^ (afterwards deputy Steward) - - - - - - - -	12 Nov. 1689.
Ralph Malbon, Clerk, Minister and Schoolmaster. - - - - - - - -	1702.
Rev. Joseph Harrower, Rector of Swettenham.	1720.
John Parnell, of the Kingdom of Ireland, Esq.	13 July, 1763.
Sir Thomas Broughton, Bart. - - -	1777.
John Glegg, the yonnger, Esq. - - -	,,
Charles Watkin John Shakerley, Esq. - -	22 Sep. 1788.
Wilbraham Egerton, Esq., of Tatton Park. -	2 Sept. 1814.
Sir Edmund Antrobus, Bart. - - - -	22 Sept. 1823.
Sir Thomas Reade. - - - - -	,, ,,
Clement Swetenham, Esq. - - - -	,, ,,
Gibbs Crawfurd Antrobus, Esq. - - -	1834.
R. Wilbraham, Jun., Esq. - - - -	,,

A few Extracts from the Court Records.

We fynd that the Aldermen & Burgesses dwellynge wythin thys towne shalbe readye att the reasonable commandement of the maiore, to goe wyth the sayd maiore unto the sayd lands and ten[emen]ts for the executynge of the sayd presentment, uppon payne of everye one of them offendynge herein shall forefayte to the quene's ma^tie^ v^s^. (1581.)

Yt is ordered that noe p[e]rson beynge a straunger shalbe made free or be suffered to dwell in thys towne or lordshippe, comynge from any place excepte the[y] have a testymonyall or certyfecate of good behavionre, and also to be put in suretyes yf the[y] have chyldren to dyscharge the towne of theire said chyldren. (1584.)

Yt is ordered also that the maiore shall have care of everye poore fatherles chylde borne in this towne, & to brynge them

uppe in the feare of gode and some good trade or occupation. (1584.)

Ytt ys ordred by the foresayde maiore & comynaltye that everye householder wythin this towne & lordeshippe shall send such yonge persons as the[y] keppe, to the churche s^r^ten tymes in the yeare, uppon warnynge geven by the curatte to be Instructed in the chathachysme (catechism) and other articles of the christian faythe. (1584.)

Yt ys ordered that noe p^r^son or p^r^sons shall putt or suffer to be putt anye sheepe sneet or any such lyke thinge into anye bread or cakes in any tyme of the yeare: nor shall put or suffer to be put into any breade or cakes any butter betweene the feast Daye of Saynt Mychaell th[e] Archangell and Saynt Barnaba[s] th[e] Apostle, uppon payne to forfayte for everye tyme iij^s^iiij^d^. (1584.)

Yt is ordered that all the Inhabitans of thys towne shall keppe theyre swyne yoked & rynged accordynge to the statute in that case made and p[ro]vyded, uppon payne to forfayte for everye swyne foure pence, except borres and sowes for a month before th[e]y pygge & a mouth after. (1584.)

Yt is ordered also that if any person or persons that now ys or hereafter shalbe suffered to keppe either Inns or Alehouses doe at any tyme from heuceforthe suffer or keppe any unlawfull game in theyre houses, or doe suffer any lighte or suspicious persons in secrette eyther in theyre chambers, buttryes, parlors & such lyke plaees, but in the companye of honeste persons, shall forfayte for everye tyme vi^s^viij^d^. (1584.)

Yt is ordered also that yf any man's sonnes s^r^vants or p^r^ntyces be taken by any of the officers after nyne of the cloke in the nyghte that then yt shalbe lawfull for the said offieers soe takynge any such p^r^sons to putt into pryson theyre to remayn durynge the maiore's pleasure for the tyme beynge. (1584.)

Yt is ordered also that everye freeman wythin this towne and lordshippe shalbe readye at the tollynge of the bell, and awayte upon the Maiore throwe the fayres (everye daye that the sayd Maiore shall walke the sayd fayre) in theyre best apparell, and also everye[one] of them havynge a sufficient weapon (those

p[er]sons that be or shalbe of the counsell of this towne to be dyschardged from wearynge and bearynge of weapons) unles the[y] or any of them can shewe sufficient cause of excuse for theyre absence or not carrynge of weapons, uppon payne to losse & forfayte for everye tyme xij^{d}. (1584.)

Ytt is ordered also that a quarte & halfe quarte dyshe shalbe had & made for the mesuerynge of butter & such lyke beynge broughte unto the markett att all tymes hereafter. (1584.)

It is ordered also that noe p[er]son or p[er]sons inhabitynge wythin this towne or lordshippe shall frome henceforthe keppe any weightes & mesures eyther drye or weate for any man^{r} [of] grayne or other thynge, unles the same be sealed marked or otherwyse allowed by the maiore upon payne to forfayte for everye tyme iij^{s}iiij^{d}. (1584.)

Yt is ordered & decreed by the sayd maio^{r} & comnaltye that everye householder wythin this towne & Lordshippe shall send all such younge psons as the[y] shall keppe, beynge of discresion, iiij tymes in the yere unto the parishe churche or chapple to be instructed in the chattechysme & orther articles of the christian fayth beynge warned thereunto by the curate. (1589.)

Ytt is further ordered & decreed by the said maior & comynaltie that M^{r} Maior nowe beynge & his successores maiores & the aldermen nowe beynge & hereafter to be of the counsell of this towne, shall, from henceforth everye saboothe & festival daye, so often as they shall come to mornynge prayer uppon any such dayes, weare eiche of them a gowne of black or sadd coloured clothe, as also upon everye Maior's court daye or assemblyes. (1590.)

Yt is moreover ordered that evrye p^{r}son or p^{r}sons that nowe doe or hereafter shall kepe any mastyfe Dogge or biche unmosoled durynge the space of one daye & a nyghte except the same be tyed, shall for everye such tyme forfayte & losse iij^{s}iiij^{d}. (1590.)

Item that there shall not be at one tyme in the sayd towne above the nvmber of foure and twentye Ale-house-Keep^{r} (excepte at the tyme of the fayres) or lesse at the discrescon of the Maior for the tyme beeynge and the foure and twentye

men elected. And those to sell there drynke after the Rate of a pennye the quarte and none otherwyse, upon payne to forfayte for each offence twoo Shillings [and] Sixe pence. (1595.)

We fynde that Richarde Thoreley and John Brueke came w^th^ a capyas from Halton and served yt upon the Bodye of Willim Rowlynson who ys an Inhabitant of this Lordshippe, and the same Rowlynson dysobayed yt, And thereupon they sayd Thoreley and Brucke stroake (struek) the same Rowlynson and hys wyffe: And that the same Thoreley and Brueke dyd contrarye to our libertyes in servynge of the same capyas, the fine imposed on each xij^d^. (1600.)

It is ordered that if anie Alderman, Capitall Burgess, or freeman shall in theire publie assemblies of the said Maior and Aldermen and Capitall Burgesses, or the major parte of them, uncivillie demeane himselfe either in speeche or gesture that such offender shall for everie such offence forfeyt to the use of the Corporacon Tenne shillings. (1625.)

Itm it is further ordered, That whatsoever pson within this Towne, shall p^r^snme either by worde or deede in anie unseemly manner to affront, or abuse the Maior, Deputie, Justices, Constables, or other officers of this towne, in the execution of his or theire office, shall, besydes the Legall penaltie appoynted in suche cases, forfeytt for everie such offence, the some of ffive shillings. (1637.)

Imprimis it is agreed by the said Maior Aldermen and Comcell, that for the better p^r^servacon of his ma^ties^ peace and of order and good government within this Towne and Boroughe, The Maior Aldermen and Comon Comcell shall everie of them within one moneth nowe nexte ensuinge p^r^vide him and themselves of a good and sufficient Halberde to be kepte in his and theire house to be ready upon all occasions for the use and service of the towne. (1637.)

Itm that all the said Aldermen in theire gownes the rest of the comon comcell in theire cloakes and the freemen aforesaid with theire halberts shall give theire severall attendance upon the Maior for the tyme beinge (or in his absence upon the Deputy) at ffaires and other convenient tymes. (1637.)

Whereas Hugh Orratt of Warrington, Groeer, threatened to Exercise his Trade within this Burrough, though he is no ffreeman or Burgess, and insists on his being admitted a Burgess on his own Terms; which being taken into consideration at this Hall, and finding there is a sufficient number of groeers in the Corporation already, and that an increase of the number would tend to the hurt rather than improvement of Trade, and looking upon the said Hugh Orratt's usage of the Corporation to be a great indignity offered to the body politick, and an attempt to Break into and invade our antient rights and previledges, Therefore it is ordered that the said Hugh Orratt shal not be admitted either Burgess or Freeman for this Burrough, neither shall he exercise the trade of a groeer within the said Burrough, under the pain and penalty of five pounds for each and every day he shall exercise such his trade in the said Burrough. (1642.)

It is ordered &c. that no mann[er] of pson or psons selling in her or theire house or houses anie ale wthin the Lordshippe of Congleton or els[where] to theire neighboures above two pence a gallon, and that the Maior for the tyme beynge shall see that ytt shalbe by sealed measures. (1642.)

It is ordered &c. that no mann of pson or psons shall putt in or make anie baken or anie oth^{r} breade wth butter from the feaste of St. Marten the Bishoppe untill the feast of St. Barnibye upon payne of forfeyture for ev[r]ie tyme iij^{s}iiij^{d}. (1642.)

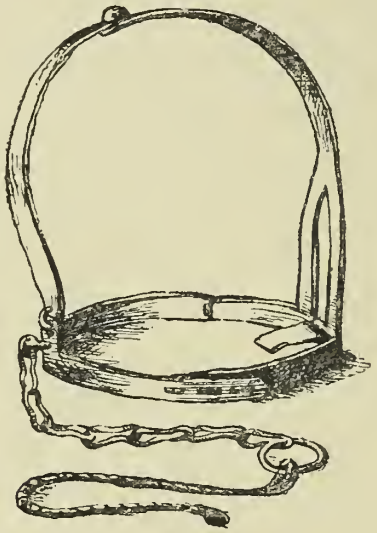
It is also unanimously ordered by this assembly that all Scotchmen and other persons carrying packs that shall hereafter hawk or expose any goods [for] sale within this Burrough shall forfett and pay the sume of one shilling Daily and every day they shall so hawk or expose goods [for] sale as aforesaid. (1642.)

It is also unanimously ordered by this assembly that there shall not be above the number of thirty four Alehouses or persons to sell ale within this Borough in any one year. (1763.)

Punishments.

IN ancient days the modes of punishment in Congleton, as in most towns, consisted of the Dungeon, Pillory, Whipping Post, Stocks, the Brank, and Cucking Stool.

The brank, or as it is sometimes called, the scold's bridle, consists of a framework of metal made so as to fit over the crown of the head, on which it is fastened with a lock. A projecting piece of sharp iron attached to the rim acts as a gag, which being inserted in the mouth, renders it difficult for the culprit to make any articulate remonstrance. I am indebted for the woodcut of the Congleton Brank to Mr. William Andrews, F.R.H.S., from whose interesting book, "Punishments of the Olden Time," the following account, written by the late Mr. Alderman William Warrington, of Congleton, for Dr. Brushfield's paper on Cheshire Branks, is taken.



The Congleton Brank.

"It was formerly in the hands of the town jailor,[a] whose services were not infrequently called into requisition. In the old-fashioned, half-timbered houses in the borough, there was generally fixed on one side of the large open fire-places, a hook, so that when a man's wife indulged her scolding propensities, the husband sent for the town jailor to bring the bridle, and had her bridled and chained to the hook until she promised to behave herself better for the future. I have seen one of these hooks, and have heard husbands say to their wives, 'If

[a] But is now preserved among other relics at the Town Clerk's Office.

you don't rest with your tongue I'll send for the bridle and hook you up.' The Mayor and Justices frequently called the instrument into use; for when women were brought before them charged with street brawling, and insulting the constables and others while in the discharge of their duty, they have ordered them to be bridled and led through the borough by the jailor. The last time this bridle was publicly used was in 1824, when a woman was brought before the Mayor (Mr. Bulkeley Johnson,) and magistrates, one Monday, charged with scolding and using harsh language to the churchwardens and constables as they went, on the Sunday morning, round the town to see that all the public-houses were empty and closed during divine service. On examination, Mr. Richard Edwards stated on oath 'that on going round the town with his co-churchwarden on the previous day they met the woman (Jane Runcorn) in a place near 'The Cockshoot,' and that immediately on seeing them she commenced a sally of abuse, calling them 'all the scoundrels and rogues she could lay her tongue to': and telling them 'it would look better of them if they would look after their own houses rather than go looking after other folks', which were far better than their own.' After other abuse of a like character, they thought it only right to apprehend her, and so brought her before the Bench on the following day. The Mayor then delivered the following sentence: 'That it is the unanimous decision of the Mayor and Justices that the prisoner (Jane Runcorn) there and then have the town's bridle for scolding women put upon her, and that she be led by the magistrates' clerk's clerk (Mr. Prosper Haslam) through every street in the town, as an example to all scolding women: and that the Mayor and magistrates are much obliged to the churchwardens for bringing the case before them.'"[b]

From Mr. Andrew's work the description of the Cucking Stool is gathered, quoted by an intelligent Frenchman who visited this country in the year 1700.

"This method of punishing scolding women is funny enough. They fasten an arm chair to the end of two strong beams, twelve or fifteen feet long, and parallel to each other. The

[b] The present Town Clerk (1886) informs me that he was a witness of the outrageous exhibition of poor "Jenny Runcorn" above mentioned; and he says the tongue piece of the "bridle" was of very little avail to check her defiant eloquence during the perambulation.

chair hangs upon a sort of axle, on which it plays freely, so as always to remain in the horizontal position. The scold being well fastened in her chair, the two beams are then placed, as near to the centre as possible, across a post on the water side, and being lifted up behind, the chair, of course, drops into the cold element. The ducking is repeated according to the degree of shrewishness possessed by the patient, and generally has the effect of cooling her immoderate heat, at least for a time."

It would be interesting to know what portion of the Dane was usually adopted for inflicting this peculiar mode of punishment.

1599	payd for mendynge the cuckinge stoole and settinge yt upp vi[1].			
1620	ffor 2 cordes to whipp 2 rogues w'th 2*d*.			
1630	Payd to Thomas Hadfeild for a bord and for mendinge the pillorye viii[d].			
1637	paid Mr. Bradshawe which he formerlie disbursed for conductinge Richard Stubbs from Chester to this towne, when he was pillored, and for a copie of his scentance ix[s].			
1637	paid to a boy for whippinge John ffoxe	0	2	0
,,	paid for a carte to tye the said ffoxe into when he was whipped	0	2	0
1646	Pd. Willm. Newton, Constable, for tendinge Towne wood and amendinge the Cuckstoole	0	5	6
1657	ffor mendynge the lock and key for the Dungeon	0	0	8
1728	Ordered by this Sessions that the said Joseph Newton Shall be stripped naked to the Skin and whipped in the Town hall (for a felony)			

(*Town Accounts.*)

The progress of civilisation has long since put a stop to such barbarous and disgusting punishments as those of the brank and ducking stool. The *raison d'etre* of these obsolete cruelties of course was that, in any quarrel between husband and wife, the latter was nearly always assumed to be in the wrong. The boot is now very much on the other foot; and the tendency is to adjudicate upon all such differences on the basis of fining the man, or at the best binding him over to keep the peace: leaving the other belligerent in full and free exercise of her native weapon. The burning of miserable old women as witches was a fitting sequence to the cruelties inflicted on the helpless sex during life. The brank and duck stool for middle life; the tar barrel for burdensome old age. "The wisdom of our ancestors" had its flaws and weak points; its credulities, its cruelties, and its cowardice.

Sports and Pastimes.

THE sports and pastimes of Congletonians three centuries ago, traced from the dusty archives of municipal chronicles, strongly mark the character of the ancient inhabitants, and their manners and customs. For its famous Bearbaits and Cockfights, Congleton was noted all the county through. On such occasions, the chief of which were at May Fair and the Wakes, the little borough would don its gayest appearance, and amid the ringing of bells and braying of trumpets, busy citizens, with the first titled gentry of the neighbourhood (including many of the gentler sex) would flock to the crowded arenas to witness these somewhat degrading sports.

In the thirteenth century sporting with bears consisted of feats of agility performed by the quadrupeds, such as dancing, tumbling, and counterfeiting the actions of men. And later rose the diversion of a man or woman dancing before and eluding the claws and teeth of a chained bear, goaded at a safe distance by its keeper. A ferocious bearbait and cockfight in the time of Henry VIII., and later, were considered royal sports; and Strutt relates the following account of a bearbait exhibited before Queen Elizabeth.[a] "It was a sport very

[a] "Sports and Pastimes," page 350.

pleasant to see the bear, with his pink eyes leering after his enemies, approach: the nimbleness and wait of the dog to take his advantage; and the force and experience of the bear again to avoid his assaults: if he were bitten in one place, how he would pinch in another to get free; that if he were taken once, then by what shift with biting, with clawing, with roaring, with tossing, and tumbling, he would work and wind himself from them; and, when he was loose, to shake his ears twice or thrice with the blood and slaver hanging about his physiognomy."

From the tradition that the inhabitants to purchase a new bear sold the chapel Bible arose the distich:

> Congleton rare, Congleton rare,
> Sold the Bible to pay for a bear.

and, moreover, even to the present time, it is not uncommon for Congletonians to be dubbed by their captious neighbours with the surly epithet of "*Congleton Bears.*"

Of the several accounts relating to this antique scandal the following I opine to be the most plausible.[b] The Wakes being very near, when the greatest bearbait took place, one of the shaggy brutes happening to die, the event plunged the promoters of the display into a sorry strait. The bearward, applying in vain for sufficient money to replace the defunct bruin, at last consulted the authorities, who, having a small surplus contained in the "towne's boxe" intended for the purchase of a new chapel bible, agreed to help him, and lent the required sum, namely, 16 -. Of course we conclude that the borrowed money was quickly restored, and the new Scriptures provided for the chapel.

Mr. Egerton Leigh, in his valuable (and now very scarce) collection of *Cheshire Ballads* immortalizes the tradition in rhyme.

> A LONG time ago, in our forefathers' days,
> They sought for amusement in all sorts of ways,
> Dog fighting! bull baiting! or drawing the brock!
> Or losing their broad lands by backing a cock!
> Then ladies of all ages raced for a smock!
> Scarce any man ever went sober to bed;
> 'Tis quite dreadful to think the lives they all led!
> At that time in *Cheshire* no fun could compare
> With that sport of all sports—viz. baiting a bear;
> Many inns of the past still tell the same tale,

[b] Clifton-upon-Dunsmore, co. Warwick, is chronicled with the same charge.

For scarce in the county a hamlet will fail
To hang up as sign a bear black, white, or brown
There's *Barton* which must of the bear be the town.
No doubt to this bear baiting we trace the cause
Why we find in *Cheshire* so many 'Bears' Paws;'
But *Congleton* bear baiting loved above all,
Headquarters, that place, of the sport we may call;
For old town accounts show what money they spent
In paying their bearwards, and how much more went,
(Three-and-sixpence) for bringing the bears to the wake,
Besides drink, the thirst of these bearwards to slake;
But truth must be told, e'en though *Congleton* blush,
We must not all sins of our forefathers hush.
A new Bible was wanted--the old one was done—
And Bibles in those days cost a precious sum!
At length all the townsfolk resolved to subscribe,
(Expense is scarce felt which the many divide).
So at length they collect all the gold they require,
To the joy of the parson, the clerk, and the choir.
'Twas the time of the wakes, when just then 'twas said
The town bear, when he was most wanted, was dead.
How to raise a new bear?—In these days 'twould be easy,
For if M.P., sheriff, or mayor, they would teaze ye;
At once to subscribe, a new bear would be bought,
Or from Wombwell's or other wild beast show, be brought;
Or a ladies' bazaar at once improvised,
That unblushing robbery, now legalised,
Which turns pincushions, penwipers, slippers, or braces,
(Forced on crabbed old gents by the fairest of faces)
To sums which are well worth anyone's robbing,
Though raised from small items, straw, tape, or bobbin;
In those days, those modern plans were all unknown,
Of stealing a friend's purse and saving your own.
The wakes were approaching!—and there was no bear!
Some one whispered (who 'twas none e'er dared to declare,
No one's ever wrong unless it be the cat,
Th' experience of all ages teaches us that),
'There's the money which to buy a Bible we raised,
With that buy a bear at once, for heaven be praised,
Our priest has so long read in th' old book, 'tis clear
He might do so still for at least one more year!'
Alas! human nature! the bear won the day,
So convincing the reason 'There's nothing to pay!'
A new bear was bought straight instead of the book
The insult the parson was thus forced to brook;
In vain he cried loudly 'My townsmen forbear,
For shame! such unbearable conduct to dare!'
This sacrilege cost Congletonians dear,
Through the breadth of the county the sneer forced to hear
(Whenever men saw Congletonian near)
'Like *Congleton* bear town, where money to save,
The Bible itself for a new bear they gave.'

P.S. The townsmen 'tis true would explain this away.
'In those days when Bibles were so dear,' they say
That they th' *old* Bible swopped at the wakes for a bear,
Having first bought a new book.' Thus shirk they the sneer,
And taunts 'gainst their town thus endeavour to clear.

EGERTON LEIGH, 1866.

The barbarous pastime of Cock-fighting was one of the fashionable amusements of the fourteenth century. Mr. Strutt mentions that usually "the cock-pit was the school, and the master the controller and director of the pastime," who reclaimed all runaway cocks as his own perquisites.

1601 Payd John Wagge for dressynge the schoolhouse at the great (Congleton) Cock fyghte 0 0 4
(*Town Accounts.*)

The same authority supplies the following details:[c] "It consists of a certain or given number of pairs of cocks, suppose sixteen, which fight with each other until one half of them are killed; the sixteen conquerors are pitted a second time in like manner, and half are slain; the eight survivors, a third time; the four, a fourth time; and the remaining two, a fifth time: so that 'thirty-one cocks are sure to be inhumanly murdered for the sport and pleasure of the spectators.' I am informed that the Welch main usually consists of fourteen pairs of cocks, though sometimes the number might be extended."

There were many enactments to encourage and keep up the old English skill in archery: three of them were passed in the reign of Henry VIII. Of these the 33 Henry VIII. c. 9, "for the maintaining artillery, (the old name for archery) and the debarring unlawful games," which were "greatly practised to the great hurt and lett of shooting and archery," required butts to be provided by the authorities in every tything village and hamlet, and enacts that every man under 60 years of age shall have bows and arrows for shooting continually in his house; and all fathers of man-children between 17 and 17 years shall provide each with a bow and two shafts, and teach them shooting, and masters are to abate the cost of their servants' bows and arrows out of their wages. The Act of 8 Elizabeth, c. 10, regulated the price of bows, and another Act of the same year (c. 14) facilitated the importation of bow staves from beyond seas.

[c] "Sports and Pastimes," page 377.

And so the old English sport of shooting at Butts with bow and arrow was frequently exercised here, and received particular attention during the wakes and fairs. At such festivals companies of strolling players frequented the town. In 1589, I find payment of five shillings, "yt was given the Lord Darcy's Players," and a smaller sum shortly after to "ye Earle of Worster's Playeres." Those of "My Lord Stafforde's" visited the town in 1595, and received a refection at the hospitality of the Corporation. Towards the third decade of the next century a more orderly and enlightened *regime* dawned, and a due observance of Sunday enforced.

1631 Geoven more unto the company of Players towards there charges, Mr. Deputie Wagge & 2 justices would not suffer them to play on ye Saboth dayc 0 6 8
(*Town Accounts.*)

After this date but few records of a Bearbait or Cockfight appear. It may be that to the minds of the inhabitants the approach of evil days was already foreshadowed, when men's fiercest struggles were matched against their fellows, their hands smeared with the blood of friend and brother: or the insidious approach of a deadlier enemy, the *Plague*, whose very breath, like some ghastly pall, o'erspread the place with desolation and death.

EXTRACTS FROM THE TOWN ACCOUNTS.

1584 Item for iij sheaves of barlye strawe & foure of Rye strawe to the Cock pytte 0 5 0
1589 payd Jeff. Stonyer for gettynge clodds & laying same at the Cockfyght 0 0 9
1589 Imprimis to Mr. Trafforde, his man, the bearewarde 0 4 4
1589 That was geven Sir John Hollcrofts bearewarde 0 2 0
1590 payd Ric: Martin for thachynge the Cockpytt 0 1 7
1591 Payd yt was geven Shelmerdyne ye bearewarde at wakes... ... 0 2 0
1592 payd Rich: Wyttacar for leadyng ij lo[a]ds clods to the Buts and ij to the Cockpyte 0 2 0
1597 Payd that was geven to Mr. Haughton of Haughton towards his man that had beares here 0 5 0
1597 payd John Burgess, of ycaton, for leadynge of clodds from lower heath to the Cockpytte 0 1 0
1599 payd for leadynge viij loads of clods to the Butts at Wakes ... 0 4 0
1601 Geven the Bearewarde at the tyme of the greate Cock fyghte the v. vi. & vii. dayes of Maye 1601 ... ... 0 6 8
1601 Payd for x^en^ quarts of wyne bestowed upon the gentlemen at the (same) great Cock fyghte & upon a preacher 0 6 8
1601 Payd that was bestowed upon young Mr. Brereton & his syster in wyne suger and other thyngs... ... ... 0 6 10
1601 Payd Rich: Spencer for wyne suger and cakes that were bestowed upon Sir John Savage, Knight 0 3 0

1601	Payd Rich: Spencer for wyne bestowed upon Sir John Savage, Knight, and the gentlewomen, the fyrst daye of the great Cockfyghte, one pottle of wyne, and for suger viij[d] and for a pottle of beare iiij[d] in all	0	2	4
1601	Also bestowed upon Sir John Savage, Knight, his followers & Mr. Wilbram in wyne & other thynges	0	6	10
1603	Bestowed upon Sir Willm. Brereton, Knyghte, Mr. Warburton & Mr. Egerton at the great Bearebayte in burned sacke & other wyne & spyce, fygges almonds & beare	0	11	10
1613	Item payd to Willm Stathorne for fetching the Bearewarde (from Knutsford) at the Wakes	0	1	0
1615	payd for Wyne bestowed upon Sir Bryan Leighe at the Cockpytt	0	1	5
1621	geven Raufe Shelmerdyne for sport made by him with his beares at Congleton Wakes	0	10	0
	Item paide to Brocke the Bearewarde at Whitsundaie	0	5	8
1636	paid to ffour men who did look after rogues and harlots on May Day	0	2	0

The Plague.

CONGLETON was a severe sufferer by the Plagues of 1603–4 and 1641–2. During the former the fourth of a Mize was levied through the country "for the relief of the infected townes of Macclesfeld and Congleton." The order is preserved in Harl. MS. 2090, fol. 26–8, together with the amounts collected in each Hundred. The following contributions were made by the several townships round Congleton: "1000 loaves, 1000 pails of milk, 50 pails of Milk Porridge, 150 good cheeses, 50 pieces of beef, 6 flitches of bacon, one great bun, 10 oat cakes. 1000 puddings, several pear pies, pasty pies, and a gallon of butter."

An order sett downe by Sir Willm Brereton, Knygte, and other Justices, upon the fyrst daye [of] October beying Saterdaye 1603, And the fyrst yeare of the Raigne of our Soverigne Lorde Kynge James: towards the Reliefe of the poore people in Congleton In the tyme of the Sicknes: Congleton to Relieve theyre owne poore on the Sundaye, Buglawton and Hulmewallfield upon the Mundaye. Newbold and Astburye upon the Tuesdaye, Odrode upon the Wednesdaye, Smallwoode upon the Thursdaye, Davenport, Somerford, Radnor, and Mor[e]ton upon the ffrydaye, Heaton and Somerford Bowthes upon the Saturdaye. And that the Constables of everye sev^{r}all Townshipps, shall gather the Benevolence of the people, and Delyver the same to the Mayor of Congleton, or To Whome he shall appoynte to Receyve yt.

Receeved from Buglawton upon Sundaye [in] the evenynge, the second of October, xvj[tteen] Peales full of Milke against Mundayes Reliefe. Receved from Newbould Astburye of M[r] Parson Caleotte, of M[r] John Brooke, of Thomas Brooke and of Thoms Lowndes. bread and pottage, and other victualls that Relieved all the poor in Lamber[t]s lane, and on Mosseley Mosse. And had also the same daye of the rest of the neighbours In Newbold Astburye some other reliefe wiche was but lyttle of the same aforesayde.

Receved from Odrode upon Wednesdaye the v[th] of October, viz. ffrom M[r] Moreton eight great Loves of bread. one great Cheese. and five flesh Pyes; ffrom M[r] Rode of Rode the same daye threttyne great loves. five Cheeses, two peeces of beefe. and xxij[d] in monye.

Of young M[r] Rode weh was sent from M[r] Arthure Davemporte, of Swettenham. eleaven great loves.

Receved from M[r] Bellott. and the tenants of Morton Aleomlowe, upon frydaye. five great loves of bread, and three cantells of Milke, ffoure whole Cheeses.

Receaved from Smallwoode upon Thursdaye the vj[th] of October from M[rs] Lowndes which was sent to George Heathcott, a great Rye lofe, a cheese, and a pye.

Receved from M[rs] Davemporte of Marton, twentye good loves and two cheeses.

Receved from M[r] Manneringe of Carmigham (Kermineham) one and twentye loves of bread.

The second and more disastrous visitation occurred in the early winter of 1641, and, despite the precautions adopted by the inhabitants, its deadly influence soon spread.

1641	Nov. 11, ffor eleaven days warding in Regard of the Sickness then suspected neare Namptwich and In Newcastle 6[d] a daie...	00	05	6
1641	Nov. 27, paide to Jno Bulckley, Ralph Brodhurst, & Jno Parnell ffor watching and warding 6 days & nights	00	06	0

The infection was raging with fatal results about the county for some time before it reached Congleton, and in the year 1637 the following restrictive by-law was enacted under John Bradshaw, then Mayor: "And in regarde that the dangers of the tymes, by reason of the Contagion of the Sicknes[s] in neighbour[ing] contries, It beinge requisit that some good orders shoulde be made for p[r]vention as muche as maie be of the approachinge danger which by God's grace and blessinge maie be the better prevented by due care taken in that behalfe It is theirfore thought fitt and soe ordered that noe Inholder, Ale house Keeper, Victualler or other pson of this Towne whatsoever shall lodge, or receive into his or theire houses, anie carrier, maltster or other pson travellinge hither from Darbey, or from anie other place infected or suspected, and generally reported to be Infected

whatsoever, or receive anie corne, graine, malte, or other Comodity from anie comon carrier that shall not bring with him a sufficient Certificate that the same malte, graine, or other Comoditie came not from anie place Infected or suspected (as aforsaid) and make oathe conserninge the same, if he be theireunto required by suche as shalbe appoynted for that purpose upon payne of forfeytnre for evrie suche offence, Twentie Shillings and that everie suche pson soe refusinge to take his oathe (as aforsaid) shall ymediatly be comitted to prison at the discrecion of the Maior and Justices, or anie one of them, or otherwise with his horses and carriage (if he have anie) to be conveyed ont of the Towne by the officers, warders, or watchmen."[a]

The tradition is that the infection was conveyed from London to this district (some accounts say to North Rode) in a box of wearing apparel. The sickness had reached the town a few days before Christmas and attacked the family of one Laplove, several of whom soon became its victims.

1641 Dec. 18, to Wm. Hollinshed ffor watching Laploves house too dayes & nights 2^s the Sickness there appearing
pd for Inkle to tye the Ded corpes att Laploves 8^d, & for cording 4^d 00 01 0
ffor a Ladder to carric the corpes to ye grave 00 00 10

Quickly it spread from house to house, carrying off whole families, for those infected rarely recovered, and not unfrequently were left to die or live as best they might. The town, once busy with thrifty inhabitants, became deserted, and the streets and thoronghfares overgrown with grass. None ventured abroad but those who, reckless of life, staggered from cabin to cabin laden with the dead, which were "either put naked into a carte or else wrapped round with a winding sheet and then drawn to ye grave dug either in ye Church yarde or in another place, and there put in aude covered with earth without sayinge anye ceremonye whatever."[b]

Dec. 28, to James Ingam for a peare of wheeles & Axle trees to Draw ye Ded to ye grave 01 09 0
Dec. 28, to Adam Okes ffor a whit nagg to draw the corps to Astbry (Astbury) 1 08 0

To stay the contagion every ingenions method was adopted, and those exchanging money for goods dropped their coins into

[a] See further Enactments, Bradshaw's Court.

[b] From an old MS.

water before the other party would handle it. By means of tongs articles were held at arm's length in the fire, and then placed on the ground for the customer to take up. There are still "plague stones," that is cubical blocks with hollowed tops to fill with water for change of money, to be seen at some of the outlets of the borough; notably one near Congleton Edge. Within the last half century a dwarf stone cross stood near Dairy Brook in Astbury to mark the spot where the temporary market was held during the plague period. On occasion of the "intake" of the roadside waste, this cross was removed to a neighbouring gentleman's garden about forty years ago.

During the two years the scourge lasted the rulers of the town seem to have exerted every effort for the good of the inhabitants, helping from the public funds as far as lay in their power. A Note shows how the Corporation paid "ffor too loads of coales to boyle clothes in Croslidge to prevent Danger of future Infecon," and purchased "pitch & frankincense to purge infected houses." How the poor starving inhabitants, driven desperate by hunger and suffering, clamoured for bread, is shewn in the accounts where the Mayor enters in his own name sums of money "disbursed amongst the unthankfull poore," and again, "more by mysealfe at odd times amongst the clamorouse poore." In another note is the following, "Rec[d] ffro Wm. Lord Brereton 60[tie] loaves of breade to distribute amongst the poore." Notwithstanding the town's distress, it was compelled to provide for a small band of soldiers, of which its rulers were threatened with a larger complement, but were excused because of the great poverty and destitution of the town. See the following:

Bestowed in wyne uppon Collonell ffytton when hee was entreated to fforbeare the quartering of 500 more souldiers Amongst us ..	00	03	04
Sent to Generall Byron in Beare & Breade togeth[r] wth a [let]ter of Request that wee might be exempted ffro a warrant that Required 20[tie] loades or thereabouts of provisions ffor his Soldiers, & was granted us	02	08	08

FURTHER EXTRACTS FROM THE TOWN ACCOUNTS.

1641	Dec. 17, to Randle Poynton ffor watching the billeted Soldiers...	00	00	8
,,	Dec. 19, to Jno Keene ffor money hee had Disbur[t] for Inkle, cording & oth[r] necessaris att the buriall of Alice Laplove & oth[rs]	00	02	2
,,	Dec. 22, ffor Coales to the Cabins 5[ll], to little Bess for 5 days attendance to the people confined in houses & Cabins 1/6 ...	00	01	11
,,	Dec. 22, to Wm. Hollenshed ffor reliefe ffor those of Moodie Street	00	03	5
,,	Dec. 24, to Roger Slater ffor too dayes allowance in Crosslidge...	00	04	2

1641, Dec. 24, pd ffor one lood of coales to the watchmen in Moodie street...	00	00	9
,, Dec. 27, to ffrank Stubbs, the burier, ffor one weekes paie ...	00	07	0
,, Dec. 28, to little Bess for a boll of Lickorise & wyne veniger ...	00	01	0
,, Dec. 28, to John Leake to buy shott & pouth[r] to Kill doggs for fear of Infeccon spreading by ym...	00	00	10
,, Dec. 28, to Laploves little girle in her weakness	00	00	2
,, Dec. 29, more for the allowance of those Shutt upp in Moodie streete 3 days	00	10	3
1642, July 23, Jn[o] Ameson for Killing W[m] Newtons Catt at the death of his sonn feareing the infeccon	00	00	4

It may be mentioned in passing that Laplove and all his family, with the exception of one little girl, appear to have died.[a] Little Bess may be likened to a gentle sister of mercy, for if chronicles err not, she was ever busy among the sick and dying. That she was of humble birth we may conclude from a note made in 1640, when the Corporation gave 2/6 "to buy little Besses mother a wynding sheet." Of the "buriers" ffrank Stubbs seems to have survived the longest. He died four years later, ten shillings being allowed by the town towards his funeral.

A story is told of a stricken burgess who feeling his dissolution approach, besought the neighbours for a cord which he could affix to his body, so that when dead it might be dragged out and buried. This was done, and eventually the dead cart, with its ghastly attendants on their nocturnal rounds, halted at the infected house. Finding all quiet, and concluding the man was dead, they attempted to drag the body from its loathsome habitation. Their efforts however were vain, pull as they might the rope refused to yield. Curious to learn the cause of this obstruction they entered the place, where, by the dim light of their torches, they found that the dying man, either by ghastly intention or unconscious chance, had attached the rope to the proverbial brank-hook in the fireplace, the body lying by itself in another part of the room.

List of Townships charged by an order of the Justices "ffor Reliefe of the distressed" viz:

ffro the Constables of Co[ngle]ton - - - -	13	5	10
ffro the Constables of Hulme Walfield - - -	1	12	0
ffro the Constables of Twemlow - - - -	0	13	8
ffro the Constables of Sandbach - - - -	1	10	5
ffro the Constables of Bettshou (Betchton) - -	1	13	4

[a] By the Astbury Register five Laploves appear to have been buried in two days.

ffro the Constables of Hassall - - - - -	0	11	4
ffro the Constables of Allger (Alsager) - - -	0	16	8
ffro the Constables of Swettenham - - - -	0	19	2
ffro the Constables of Gasworth - - - -	3	04	0
ffro the Constables of Rode - - - - -	2	16	0
ffro John Shaw Constable of Brereton - - -	1	19	2
ffro the Constables of Smethwicke - - - -	0	07	2
ffro the Constables of Someford Boothes - - -	2	15	9
ffro the Constables of Arcklidd - - - -	0	05	4
ffro the Constables of Morton - - - - -	2	08	0
ffro the Constables of Sydington - - - -	0	12	0
ffro the Constables of Chelford & Withington - -	1	9	6
ffro the Constables of Capestorne - - - -	0	14	4
ffro the Constables of Davenport - - - -	1	18	4
ffro the Constables of Kermigham (Kermincham) -	0	15	9
ffro the Constables of Somerford Radn[r] - - -	2	14	4
ffro the Constables of Church Hulme - - -	0	08	9
ffro the Constables of Buglawton - - - -	4	09	3
ffro the Constables of Lower Withington - - -	1	13	3
ffro the Constables of Alcumlow - - - -	2	13	9
ffro the Constables of Smalewood - - - -	2	06	10
ffro the Constables of Lawton - - - - -	0	17	0
ffro the Baron of Kynderton - - - - -	5	0	0
ree[d] att three severall times froo Doct[r] Dode[d] - -	10	05	0
ffr the Constables of Astburye - - - - -	01	02	0

[d] Rector of Astbury.

Civil War Period.

MOST towns of this old England of ours possess amongst their ancient annals much that is valuable to the antiquary and interesting to the generality of readers. There are some as yet remaining in obscurity, whilst others, happily brought to light, continue perpetuated as generation after generation pass away. Historians carefully sifting prosy details and collecting scattered links bearing with them traditional associations of a bygone age and people, may knit together a number of pages, from the very interstices of which wells up a narrative of keenest interest; surrounded with a halo of historic and almost romantic truth.

In arranging the scenes in this chapter of Congleton history I have perchance gone further afield in search of actors concerned with the period of which I write than prudence or than a sager and more experienced historian would condone. Also, in the attempt to produce a brief account of those troublous times which preceded and continued during England's Commonwealth, I have allowed myself unwittingly to linger, it may be, injudiciously, over the narrative of a single actor's career; because the associations connected with no mean portion of that one man's life are so closely allied with the past history of our little town. Further, in writing of the separate parts displayed in the shifting scenes of that period I have wished to be just and

gentle, and I earnestly trust that if conscience and sympathy and the chronicles extant of the times have failed to produce a pleasing record of the past, my pen has not been guilty of more than a harmless indiscretion.

With the dreaded pestilence in their midst, and the upheavings of civil war surrounding them, the inhabitants of Congleton, scanty and ill fed, were but poorly prepared for the exactions already forced upon them. In briefly reviewing the period prior to the conflict between King Charles and his Parliament it is necessary to commence with the year 1637, when the prime mover in the dark scenes which followed was Mayor of, and an influential man in, Congleton.

John Bradshaw, born at Wybersley Hall, in 1602, was the second son of Henry Bradshaw, of Marple and Wybersley, and Catherine his wife, daughter and coheiress of Ralph Winnington, of Offerton Hall, Stockport. At the parish church of that town, where he was baptised, his name is thus recorded in the Register:

1602. Dec. 10. John, the sonne of Henrye Bradshawe, of Marple, baptized.

Against this entry some zealous Royalist has written in a later hand the word "Traitor." At Bunbury Grammar School, under Edward Burghall, afterward the noted vicar of Acton, Bradshaw received the early portion of his education. Subsequently he removed to the free school at Middleton, in Lancashire. For both these institutions he seems to have entertained an affectionate regard, bequeathing to each at his death "the summe of five hundred poundes for the increaseing of the constant wages payd to the Schooll master and Usher." It is a popular belief, but only handed down by tradition, that he also attended King Edward's Grammar School at Macclesfield: and that on leaving he traced the following prophetic lines on a gravestone in the churchyard of old St. Michael's:

> My brother Henry must heir the land,
> My brother Frank must be at his command,
> Whilst I, poor Jack, shall do that
> Which all the world will wonder at.

Strange, these words, if true, for seldom has any county produced a man, who, by sheer force of will, raised himself to a position of greater magnitude and power.

Unlike his older brother Henry, who became the famous Parliamentarian soldier, John Bradshaw chose the law for his profession, and was articled to an attorney at Congleton, with whom he studied until his departure to London: where, when twenty years of age, he became a student at Gray's Inn, and was called to the Bar in 1627. He returned to Congleton probably about the year 1630, and was appointed legal adviser or "Councillor" to the Corporation, and the honour of being a freeman of the town conferred upon him:

Spent in Sacke and Beare at the makinge M^r^ Bradshawe a freeman vii^s^.

His ability and affluence rapidly obtained for him an influential voice in matters concerning the town, and in 1637, simultaneous with his appointment of Attorney-General for Cheshire and Flintshire he was chosen Mayor of Congleton. Here is appended a verbatim copy from the original MS. of the Assembly and transactions at one of Bradshaw's Courts:[a]

Burgus de Congleton in Comty Cestr.

Certeyne orders Lawes and ordinances sett downe by the Maior, Aldermen and Comon Councell of the Towne aforsaid for the better Regiment and goverment of the Inhabitance of the same and preservacon of peace and good order there, the nyne and twentithe daie of September in the thirteenth yeare of the Raigne of his gracious ma^ty^ Kinge Charles, Ano. Dom. 1637.

John Bradshawe, Esq., Maior
Edwarde Drakeforde, Alderman, Justice of Peace
Randull Rode,[b] Alderman, Justice of Peace
William Newton, Alderman, deputie-Mayor
William Knighte, Alderman
Raufe Wagge, Alderman
Roger Hobson, Alderman
John Rode, Alderman
John Walker, Alderman

(common councilmen.)

Roger Buckley
Thomas Spencer
James Hall
Richard Poynton

[a] Order Book, 1637, (Town Records.)
[b] Refused the Order of Knighthood at King Charles' Coronation.

William Mottershead	Rauffe Homersley
John Rode, tanner	William Drakeford, tanner
Robertt Knighte	Richard Walker
John Smythe	Tobias Parnell
Edward Grosvenor	George fforde
Hugh Phithean	William Lyngarde

Inprimis. It is agreed by the said Maior, Aldermen and Councell of this Towne That for the better p^r^servacon of his ma^ties^ peace, and of order and good government within this Towne and Boroughe, The Maior, Aldermen and Comon Councell shall everie of them within one moneth nowe nexte ensuinge, provide him and themselves of a good and sufficient Halberde to be kept in his and theire house and houses, to be ready upon all occasions for the use and service of the towne, and as shalbe needefull and convenient, And Likewise that everie such freeman, and others, as are Inhabitinge within the same towne and libties thereof and are mentioned in a note or Catalogue Subscribed by the Maior and two Justices of the peace, Aldermen and Comon Councell of the Towne, or the greatest parte of them shall in like maner provide everie of them a sufficient Halbearde for the use and purpose aforsaid, before the ffeaste daie of St. Martin the Bishopp in winter nexte ensuinge upon paine of everie of them, Tenne shillings, makeinge defaulte thereof, The same to be Imediatlie Levied upon theire goodes. And in case of resistance, the parties resistinge and makeinge defaulte as aforesaid, to be comitted to prison, there to remaine untill suche tyme as the said forfeytures shalbe severally by them paide.

And it is also ordered, And M^r^ Maior is hereby intreated to cause these halberds to be pvided for as soone as conveniently he can, recevinge moneys for the same within one weeke after the same shall come to the pties handes. The same moneys to be paide to suche as M^r^ Maior shall appointe for that purpose. Every man also payinge his ratable parte or portion for the Carriage of the same from the place where they shalbe boughte.

Etm. that all the said Aldermen in theire gownes, The reste of the Comon Councell in theire Cloakes, And the freemen aforsaid with theire Halberts shall give theire severall Attendance upon the Maior for the tyme beinge or in his absence upon the Deputy at ffaires and other convenient tymes when the Maior or his Deputy shall appoynte upon paine of forfeitinge of everie of them five shillings to be levyed as aforsaid on the pties resistinge the Levy to be imprisoned untill they have paide the same. The said forfeytures to [be] ymployed to and for the use of the Towne in such sorte as the Maior, Aldermen, and Councell of this Towne or the major pte of theme shall thinke fitinge and expedient.

Etm. it is Likewise ordered that the nowe Constable shall bringe in within three daies nowe next ensuinge all the Halberts belonginge unto this Towne unto the Towne Hall to be in the custody of the Serjeant untill the keepinge of them be disposed of by the Maior, Aldermen and Councell of the Towne, for the use of the Towne.

Etm. that the foure Constables for the tyme beinge, And five more of the freemen of this Towne not beinge of the Councell of the Towne, or soe manie of them as the Maior for the tyme beinge shall appointe shalbe ready with theire sevrall Halbearts to attend the Maior for the time beinge unto and from the Chappell every Sonday and other Holy Daie to Divine Service and Sermons, and at other convenient tymes and places, as they shalbe thereunto required. And that everie of them makeinge defaulte shall forfeyte to the Townes use (as aforsaid) five shillings to be Levyed as aforsaid, or in case of resistance the pties resistinge to be Imprisoned untill suche tyme as they and everie of them shall paie the said forfeture.

Etm. that noe person shall suffer his Swine to goe abroade in the streete upon paine to forfett for everie tyme soe doeinge twelve pence to be Levyed upon the goods of the ptie offendinge accordinge to former orders to that purpose made and provided.

Etm. that noe person shall suffer his Swine to trespace upon his neighbors gronndes upon paine to forfeit everie tyme for everie suche offence twelve pence to the ptie greeved, to be Levyed upon the goods of the offenders, or the offendor to be Imprisoned (as aforsaid) untill he have paide the same, Provided that theise orders touchinge swine shall not take place untill after the ffeaste daie of St. Martyn the Bishopp in winter nexte ensuinge, but from that tyme followinge.

Etm. it is Likewise ordered by Comon Consente, That Mr Redman the minister of this Towne shall have his former wages allowed him by the Towne, well and duly paide him, he contentinge himselfe theirewith, and orderinge himselfe otherwise as is fitt And in defaulte theirof a newe minister to be chosen and pvided by the Maior with the consente and privitie (*sic*) of the Aldermen and Councell of the Towne.

And in regarde that the dangers of the tymes, by reason of the Contagion of the Sicknes in neighbor Contries, It beinge requisit that some good orders should be made for pvention as muche as maie be of the approachinge danger which by God's grace and blessinge maie be the better prevented by due care taken in that behalfe, It is theirefore thought fitt and soe ordered That noe Inholder, Ale house Keeper, Victualler or other pson of this Towne whatsoever shall lodge, or receive into his or theire

houses, anie carrier, malster, or other pson travellinge hither from Darbey, or from anie other place Infected or suspected and generally reported to be Infected whatsoever. Or receive anie Corne, graine, Malte, or other Comodity from anie comon carrier that shall not bringe with him a sufficient Certificate That the same malte, graine, or other Comoditie came not from anie place Infected or suspected (as aforsaid) and make oathe conserninge the same, if he be theireunto required, by suche as shalbe appoynted for that purpose upon paine of forfeyture for everie suche offence Twentie shillings. And that everie suche pson soe refusinge to take his oathe (as aforsaid), shall ymediatly be comitted to prison at the discrecion of the Maior and Justices, or anie one of them, or otherwise with his horses and carriage (if he have anie) to be conveyed out of the Towne by the officers, Warders, or Watchmen. And it is ordered that due and diligent watche and warde shalbe contynued in the places accustomed, And at the houres and tymes accustomed or otherwise, in suche manor and forme as the Maior, Deputie, and Justices of the Towne, or anie two of them, shall in that behalfe appointe, And whosoever shall refuse to doe his duty in that kinde shall forfeit for everie defaulte five shillings to be Levied as aforsaid, or the partie to be ymprisoned as aforsaid.

Etm. it is further ordered that noe Inholder, Ale house Keeper or Victualler shall duringe the tyme of the Infection in the neighbor ptes receive into theire House anie pson or psons, after tenne of the clocke in the eveninge, unlesse the same pson or persons be well knowne to them and suche as they will answer for, or that they be thereunto allowed by the Maior, Deputie, and Justices, or anie of them, upon payne of forfeyture five shillinges to be Levied (as aforsaid) or the pties to be ymprisoned.

Etm. that whatsoever pson or psons of this Towne or Lordshipp shall prsume to fetche or bringe into this Towne during the tyme of the Infection in the neighborg. Countyes anie corne, fruite, or other Comodities from anie Infected Towne or place, The same to be discovered by Examinacon of the pty upon oathe or otherwise, shall ymediatly upon his retorne be shutt up in his house, or some other place to be appoynted for the purpose by the Maior or his Deputie, or Justices of the Peace, or anie two of them, And shalbe detayned theire for the space of Twentie daies, or for longer tyme, as occasion shalbe, The same partie to be maintayned out of his owne goodes, if he have anie, And if not, at the Townes charge, and watche and warde to be kepte about the said house duringe the said tyme of Restrainte as the said Maior &c. shall appoynte.

Etm. it is further ordered That whatsoever pson within this Towne shall psume either by worde or deede in anie unseemly manner to affronte or abuse the Maior, Deputie, Justices, Constables, or other officers of this Towne, in the execution of his or theire

office and places, shall besydes the Legall penaltie appoynted in suche cases forfeytt for everie suche offence the sum of five shillings, to be Levyed (as aforsaid) If he be of ability. And if not shalbe ymprisoned and further punished as to the Maior &c. shall seem fitt, and be agreeable to the Lawes of the Realme, in that behalfe Provided alwaies that the severall penalties aforsaid shalbe Levyed by the Maiors Serjeant for the tyme beinge, assisted with the Constables (if theire be occasion) out of the Offender's goods, The same goods to be deteyned in the Serjeant's handes for the space of five daies, within which tyme, if the offendor doe not redeeme them by payinge of the forfeyture deducted, the overplus to be restored to the ptie offendinge.

And Lastlie all officers of this Towne, and all others whome these p^rsents maie concerne are hearby required and intreated to take speciall care of the observance and execution of the premises so farr as in anie wise it maie concerne theym, As they will answere the contrarie att theire severall penalties.

During Bradshaw's Mayoralty his personal attention was much given to the welfare and good government of the borough. Here in his old house of Elizabethan character, with its high pointed gables, quaint windows, and black-and-white diapered walls, Bradshaw lived in no mean state; keeping an ample retinue of servants, and surrounded by such aristocratic appendages as the custom of the times required. It may be inferred, too, that at this early stage of his career, during the brief quietude of his country life, the lofty domineering tendency of his nature began to evince itself. His shrewd knowledge of the law; the strict observance of all details attending municipal matters; his jealous exaction of the recognition of his superiority from those beneath him, either in intellect or social status: begat among his small circle of Congletonian acquaintances sentiments of either esteem or fear. From these he exacted the homage due to his civic office, as appears by the statutes ordaining that "Aldermen in theire gownes, the rest of the comon councell in their cloakes, and the ffreemen aforesaid with theire halberts, shall give theire severall attendance upon the Maior for the tyme beinge att ffaires &c." And that four constables and five freemen "shalbe ready with theire sevrall halbearts to attende the Maior for the tyme beinge unto and from the Chappell every Sonday and other Holy Dais to divine service and sermons, and at other convenient tymes and places as they shalbe thereunto required."

Beyond a thoughtful mien and large intelligent eyes, there appears but little in Bradshaw's exterior to stamp the superiority he enjoyed over many of his fellow men. Calvinist and Republican, an ardent admirer of real and constitutional liberty, it is not difficult to imagine the eagerness with which he regarded the approaching struggle between King and Parliament; and when the first shot was fired and the storm so long gathering burst over England, Bradshaw felt he no longer should remain living a somewhat obscured life in Congleton; and about the time the Royal Standard was being unfurled at Nottingham he shut up his Congleton home and established himself in his town house, in Basinghall Street, London. Shortly after this began his extraordinary advancement. Step by step he rose, his ability and ambition fed by men as uncompromising as himself, until its consummation was achieved by an unenviable immortality, earned under the title of "Regicide."

John Bradshaw's sojourn in London brought him further into notice by the rebellious Parliament, and two years after he quitted Congleton he was engaged with Newdegate and William Prynne as one of the Counsel in the prosecution of the two Irish Lords, Macmahon and Macguire. In 1645 he was chosen junior Counsel for the Parliament, and in the following year would have been elected a Commissioner of the Great Seal, had not his nomination been opposed and eventually set aside by the House of Lords. Shortly after this event he was installed Chief Justice of Chester, and in 1647 was made one of the Judges for Wales. In the same year he again assisted Prynne, this time in the memorable prosecution of loyal Judge Jenkins, who fearlessly bearded the Parliament, and boldly proclaimed the House "a den of thieves." In 1648 Bradshaw received further proof of Parliament's favour, which was signalized by his promotion to the rank of Sergeant-at-Law. His next preferment history has made for ever famous: his election by the House of Commons to be Lord President of the Court which eventually robbed Charles I. of his life.

Hapless Charles Stuart! If, as the Lord President of that illegal court, a court set up to try the hereditary king of England arraigned for *treason* because he had levied war against a disloyal Parliament, a Cheshire man and one of Congleton notoriety sat and became largely instrumental in bringing his sovereign to the block, there were many loyal men of Cheshire

House of President Bradshaw, pulled down 1820.
From an old pen and ink drawing in the possession of Mrs. J. Johnson.

crowded round the royal standard. Gallant (though some roystering) Cavaliers and sturdy yeomen eager alike to encounter their grim cropped-haired opponents, aye even Cromwell's invincible "Ironsides" themselves who so disastrously turned the tide of victory at Marston Moor and on Naseby Field.

In Congleton, even the fearful influence of the Pest failed to check the party spirit then rife amongst high and low degree, particularly traceable to those having an important voice in the management of town's matters; and from this, like the desolating snow of 1635,[c] they revived, sadder mayhap, yet firmer in their convictions: as zealous on one side in their cry for "God and the King," as those on the other of "God and the Cause." Bradshaw's popularity here was on the wane, and, towards the close of his career a strong spirit of antagonism seems to have been manifested. He was requested to resign the office of High Steward. This he seemed unwilling to do, and it was deemed expedient to frame an Enactment declaring that Bradshaw had no further authority to convene any Court in Congleton: and that if the officer, whose duty it was to proclaim the assembling of each Court, refused to obey the President's summons, he was to "bee borne out, saved harmless, and kept indemnified at the comon charge of the Burroughe."

Amongst those of the town ostensibly on the king's side, who afterwards compounded as Royalists for disaffection to the Parliament, were Aldermen William Knight, John Walker, and George Ford. These succeeded each other in the mayoralty, after whom John Henshaw, one of the Republican side, was elected. The fight for ascendancy between the two parties was closely maintained, and George Ford was again chosen at the end of John Henshaw's year of office. After this the Republican faction rose in majority, headed by the brothers Tobias and Richard Parnell,[d] one an Alderman and Mayor, and the other of the Common Council, with Jonathan Walley, Town Clerk, who succeeded in forming a council of adherents to the Parliament: and when the Commonwealth was established, to commemorate the event in Congleton, a richly gilt Mace was bought for the town.[e]

[c] 1635 payd for cloth to make a winding sheet for a child that perished in the great snow 0 2 7

[d] See further notice of this family, page 109.

[e] See Mr. Wilson's paper on the Mace, pp. 101–109.

Silenced, but not cowed, the defeated partisans of the King were not idle, and, as shewn by his Royal Composition Paper, John Walker "did joyne with the Enemy att their *Randerouze* on Knottes ford heath, and bore armes for them & was Conductor of a Company of Souldiers there." He also "did at severall other tymes joyne with the Enemy in associacon & bore Armes in Congleton afforesaid for them, and was one prime occasion of raysinge a Company in Congleton afforesaid for the Enemy when Namptwich was besieged."[f]

By another note taken from the examination of witnesses at Gawsworth in 1657, relating to the exactions of Tolls between the town and Macclesfield,[g] it further appears "the Magistrates of Congleton have byn for the King, and those of Macclesfeild [for the] Captaines and other officers of comand ffor the Parlimt ptye. And have taken the Maior of Congleton prisner, and broken open and rifled the study of one M^r^ Willm Drakeford, an eminent professor, Clearke, and a gent of greate imployment in Congleton, who had many wroytings and records Concerninge the p^r^viledges of Congleton for the most part in his Custody and keepinge, weh were all taken away by the men of Macclesfeild, and many other incivilityes comitted by their souldiers when they quartered in this said town."

At the commencement of the troubles, Nantwich, then the most important town, save Chester, in the county, declared openly for the Parliament, and with the army there and the town of Congleton a regular communication was established. Sir William Brereton, Baronet, of Handforth, was appointed Commander of the Parliamentary forces in this district, and under his zealous charge Nantwich remained disloyal to the last. From the few pages extant of the Mayor's Accounts, set down with a scrupulous attempt at accuracy, and interesting ambignity, we learn to what straits the Congletonians were put. To provide for the army at Nantwich enormous exactions of corn and provisions and heavy sums of money were made upon the town. Trained Bands had to be furnished. Soldiers of both sides demanded quarters for themselves and their horses: "worshippfull" and "honourable" captains and colonels had to be entertained by the cowed inhabitants, the greater portion of whom, apprehensive of those higher in position and of a military

[f] By trade he is styled a "skinner." Royal Composition Papers, (see page 51.)

[g] Corporation Muniments. Miscellaneous Papers, vol. 2.

calling, became adherents to the strongest party; and what with the quarrelling soldiery, raids on provision, and demands for money, the little borough was almost driven to its last extremity.

Sir William Brereton, he whom the gentle authoress[h] of *The Ladye Shakerley* has named "Cheshire's Bad Son," because of the part he took in the rebellion, had frequently befriended and patronized the town. To him the authorities at last appealed, and a messenger was despatched with "a peticon to S^r^ Willm Brereton on ye towns behalfe." Their troubles, however, seem to have continued a long time after its dispatch. On one occasion the earl of Derby passed through the town and was entertained with wine at the cost of 9/4. The good earl's errand may be easily understood from this:

given a boy to hould our horses untill wee had excused ourselves to ye Earle of Derbie in Sending him no men	0	0	2

At another time "burned ale, beire and victualls were bestowed upon Colonell Mannayring and those Captaynes and Companies that came along wth him fro London." "Coll: Bowyer, Coll: Stepkins & other commanders who had purposed to have quartered in the towne with their soldiers" were persuaded by the entreaty of the Mayor to move on to Leek. Five shillings were "pd to John Low for quartering of three men of major Lamberts company one night." The following extracts from the old accounts offer conjectures of interest and curiosity:

1643	Paid to Roger Kent for Meate & Drinke for Sir Willm Brereton Soldeirs	0	5	0
	To John Hackney for carrying 2 loads of oats to Namptwich .	0	2	4
	Paid to Raph Broadhurst to buy belts and Bandeleroes for the trayned souldiers and his charges to Namptwich .. .	0	8	0
	Payd for burned ale, beire, & victualls, bestowed upon Colloncll Mannayring and those Captaynes and Companies that came along with him fro London	0	10	0
	To a poore Darbyshire minister driven forth of the country by Souldiers	0	2	6
	To John Lowe for the preachers dinners upon an exercise day[i] ..	0	4	8
1644	For carriage of ye Oats to Namptwych 4 horse loades	0	4	0
	For victualls & drink for Sir Willm. Brereton's men at their journing from Leeke	0	18	0
	Raph Broadhurst his charges to Namptwich to carrie the money thither	0	5	0
1645	Pd for a guide to Leeke	0	0	6
	Pd for shouing Captain Dainton's horses the some of	1	0	0
	Pd to John Smith for Captaine Brereton's Charges one night ...	0	9	0
	Pd Tobias Parnell for Plaisters and oyles for the trained soldiers	0	8	2
	Pd for quarteringe a lame soldier of Captaine ffinches	0	3	0

[h] One of the house of Egerton.

[i] Special prayer and sermon day.

1645	Spent upon Captain Munkes and others	0	1	0
	Pd to the Sequestrations the 30th of May, 1645	5	0	0
	Pd to the Constables for defrayinge the charges of Two Teames imposed upon the towne by the Major Master generall belonging to the Scotch Armie	1	6	8
	Pd to Martin Weatherhead for goeinge to Knipsley to enquire wch way Sir Willm Brereton went	0	0	4
1646	Paid for quartering pt of Colonell Jones Troupe	1	13	0
	Paid for quartering of Colonell Jones troup which was too short which the out burgesses and some others of our townes men would not paie	2	2	0
	Bestowed upon Captain Villars and his officers by appointment of M^r^ Mayor and the Justices	0	1	4
	Bestowed on M^r^ Biddulph when he came from Rushton grange in Mutton Ale and Bread	0	11	4
	For quartering soldiers & horses of Colonell Tomlinsons Regiment	1	8	4
1647	Pd to one Lt. Dutton a Cheshire gent who had a certificate from Maior Bradshawe	0	1	6
1650	Pd to the souldiers w^ch^ came to gather the arrears for Bridges ...	0	4	0
	Pd Rich: Moulton for his Cart to Leeke w^t^ the army	0	6	8
1651	Paid to Roger Booth for delivrg up of his armes	0	5	0
1654	Paid for writing ye conveniences of Eaton & Hullmafield twise over & for a messinger to bring one part of it to Collonell Duckenfield...	0	3	0

But with the dawn of 1644 the royal cause grew weaker. The momentous defeat of Lord Byron at Nantwich, the surrender of Crewe and Doddington Halls, Cholmondeley and Beeston Castles, and lastly the disasters of Rowton Moor, more than counterbalanced the victories gained at Edge Hill, Newbury, and Newark. And the ill-fated King took refuge with the Scottish army, an army that,—to its everlasting dishonour—for a given sum of money covenanted with the English Parliament for the royal person, and Charles was brought in royal state, though virtually a prisoner, to Holmby, in Northamptonshire, and eventually to Whitehall. Not for this had brave Sir Geoffrey Shakerley and his little band of Hulme retainers fought side by side with the dauntless Prince Rupert; not for this had Sir Edmund Verney given his life at Edge Hill, clinging to the royal colours even as he died: nor had so many of the very noblest of this county's chivalry, squire and cavalier, fought and fallen.

On January 20, 1649, the King was brought before the High Court of Justice in Westminster Hall, where Bradshaw presided, scarlet-robed, and wearing his memorable peaked hat: the Bunbury schoolboy, the lawyer's apprentice, the Congleton citizen and Mayor. Is it to be wondered at that in his high calling of Lord President he should elect to wear his own hat in the presence of the captive Charles, and express displeasure

that the vanquished King remained covered when standing there before his relentless accusers? The proceedings and fearful issue of that trial are matters of English History. There sat the "Regicide," supported by the two skilful lawyers, Lisle and Say, and scarce eighty out of one hundred and thirty-five of the Commissioners who had been nominated for the trial of the King. The impeachment accused the monarch of "designs to erect to himself an illimited and tyrannical power, to overthrow the rights and liberties of the people: of high treason in respect of levying war against the present Parliament," and that he was so arraigned on behalf of the good people of England. "Not a hundredth part of them," boldly proclaimed one[1] in whose veins the blood of the Veres boiled at the spectacle of outraged royalty, and whose husband had "more wit than to be there." Neither was it. The voice of the people had neither been questioned nor heard. The regicidal act was the work of a certain faction of the House of Commons, and in no sense were the people of England, generally speaking, therein implicated. The King, dignified and brave, for despite Charles Stuart's mental infirmities, and they were many, physically he was as brave as a lion, and as calm and collected when faced by fearful odds on the battle field of Newbury, as then, when with stern voice he disputed the authority of Bradshaw and his myrmidons, denying that England had been an elective kingdom, "but a hereditary monarchy for near a thousand years." With insolent tone, Bradshaw bade him question the Assembly with becoming deference and humility: at which the King, his anger justly roused, inveighed against those unjust proceedings, praying Heaven to avenge him of his enemies. But the Parliament, governed by Cromwell and his army, were implacable; Charles Stuart was to die, and fifty-nine grim Puritans assembled in Bradshaw's magnificent house, where the horrid death warrant was signed, the first signature on that black scroll being that of

Jo: Bradshawe.

The fearful tragedy enacted that bitter morning, Jan. 30, 1649, before the windows of Whitehall, needs little relating. There stood the King, brave and noble, attended by good Bishop Juxon and the faithful Herbert; even uncouth Colonel Hacker, in his

[1] Lady Fairfax.

burnished helmet, being visibly touched by the wondrous calmness with which the royal martyr met his death. The rending shout which shook the heavens at King Charles's murder commenced the reaction which eventually placed his weak-minded and sensual son upon the throne. But to return to Bradshaw. His popularity did not cease with the fall of Charles. With the high calling of Lord President followed both honours and immunities. "A retinue of officers was appointed to attend him going and returning from Westminster Hall: lodging was provided for him in New Palace Yard: he was to be preceded by a sword and mace, carried by two gentlemen: and in Court he had a guard of 200 soldiers: and had a chair of crimson velvet in the middle of the Court.[k] He was chosen President of the Council of State, of which his kinsman, the immortal John Milton, was Foreign Secretary. He was appointed Chief Justice of Wales, and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. The regal residence of Deanery House at Westminster was given him, and his income increased from the plundered estates of Lord Cottington and the Earl of St. Albans.

But between Cromwell and Bradshaw a tacit rivalry existed, and at length an opportunity offering itself, the latter, in his usual intrepid manner, boldly defied the great Lord General. Cromwell, at all times apprehensive that the foundation of the Commonwealth was unsound, sought means whereby he could establish a firmer hold on its councils. The dissolution of the Long Parliament in 1653 was the outlet of his contempt for the majority of its members, whose allegiance to himself he doubted more than their faithfulness to the cause. On the 20th day of April, accompanied by a troop of some 300 soldiers, he assembled at Westminster, and breaking in upon the Council, forcibly dispersed its members, whom he accused of being guilty of "tyranny, oppression, and robbery;" sarcastically referring to the Mace he cried, "What shall we do with this fool's bauble? Here, take it away!" And so the vulgarly called "Rump" Parliament was dissolved. The same day, Bradshaw, eager to exhibit to the country his independence of Cromwell's authority, summoned the members of the Council of State, of which he was President; and when the Lord General, accompanied by Lambert and Harrison, appeared at the doors and declared that if

[k] Cauldfield's "High Court of Justice," page 2.

they were there as private persons they should not be disturbed, but if as a Council of State, that was no place for them. Sternly addressing Bradshaw, he added: "And, since you cannot but know what was done at the House in the morning, so take notice that the Parliament is dissolved." Bradshaw's defiant reply has made his words memorable. He said—"Sir, we have heard what you did at the House in the morning, and before many hours all England will hear. But, sir, you are mistaken to think that Parliament is dissolved, for no power under heaven can dissolve them but themselves: therefore, take you notice of that." But Oliver Cromwell was then in the zenith of his power, and Bradshaw's intrepid defiance lost him even the assumed friendship of the Lord Protector, who, during the year and nine months England was without a Parliament ruled with a rigid and jealous hand. His personal dislike of Bradshaw is gathered from the letter written to Major-General Bridge, at Middlewich, urging that his candidature at the Chester election should be opposed. Bradshaw, nevertheless, was successful so far as the election went: but owing to a double return being made neither candidate took his seat. At this time he was High Steward of Congleton, and the following note is suggestive that the Mayor had been summoned to attend at Chester that day:

> To Jo: Whooley for going to Chester on ye election day to M^r^ Bradshaw to excuse M^r^ Mayors attendance 0 2 6
> (*Town Accounts.*)

Cromwell died on the 3rd September, 1658, and shortly afterward Bradshaw's health began to decline. His zeal in attending the Council to remonstrate with Lambert, who with his soldiers had prevented Lenthall the Speaker from entering the House, brought on an ague, which speedily terminated his life. On this memorable occasion Bradshaw sternly rebuked the members, and, when one Sydenham excused the act as being "a call of the Divine Providence," Bradshaw, ill as he was, stood up and declared his abhorrence of that detestable action, and told the Council "that being now going to his God, he had not patience to sit there and hear His great name so openly blasphemed." He died 22 November, 1659, in the 57th year of his age: and was magnificently buried in Westminster Abbey, from whence, after the Restoration, to the infinite opprobrium of Charles II.

and the restored government, his body was disinterred, and, with that of Cromwell and Ireton, hung on the common gallows at Tyburn; their heads being struck off and placed on Westminster Hall. John Bradshaw died childless. His wife was Mary, daughter of Thomas Marbury, of Marbury, in this county, who died some years before him without having had any issue.

The incidents related in the few previous pages have introduced several interesting subjects worthy of narrative. Conspicuous amongst these are: the Defence of Biddulph Hall, the setting up of the Congleton Mace, and a brief account of the family of Parnell.

Defence of Biddulph Hall.

ON the way from Congleton to the neighbouring hamlet of Biddulph, cresting one of the green slopes which on either side flank its approach, may be espied the ivy-mantled tower of Biddulph Hall. Leaving the main road but a short distance before the old forge with its gigantic water-wheel is reached, the traveller crosses the shallow bubbling stream, and after ascending the grassy mounds, finds himself but a few minutes' walk from this picturesque group of ruins. Situated in the county of Stafford, but within half a mile of the Cheshire boundary, and alas! but now a crumbling group of what was once a beautiful specimen of those graceful structures which mark the Elizabethan era, this old historic landmark has associated with its history much of the turmoil of the years 1643–4. At that period it was owned by one John Biddulph, who was the grandson of the builder, Francis Bydulphe, and a staunch supporter of the King.[a]

Sampson Erdeswicke, who lived during the sixteenth century, in his "Survey of Staffordshire," has written the fullest account of this family. After the Norman Invasion Biddulph, with other lands, was granted by the Conqueror to one of his Norman soldiers, Ormus le Guidon, whose son, Alwrid, inherited the adjoining district of Knypersley. Through the failure of

[a] He contributed £1 9s. 6d. for the relief of the poor of Congleton during the time of the Plague.

Biddulph Hall.
From a Drawing by Mr. C. Wilson.

male heirs the estate became divided, and eventually passed to other families, members of which intermarried. William Bidulphe de Bidulphe married the heiress of Richard Greenway. The heraldic bearings of the Greenways, subsequently adopted by the Biddulphs, may be seen in the east window of Biddulph Parish Church.[b] Richard Biddulph, a descendant of this marriage, was the ancestor of the family from which Francis Bydulphe, the builder of the old Hall, descended. In the possession of this family it remained until the year 1652, when by an Act of Parliament it was forfeited because of the opposition its owners had set up against the Parliament. After the Restoration the property was restored to the Biddulphs, who held it until the extinction of the male line of that family. Coming to more modern times Knypersley passed into the possession of the Bowyers, who sold the estate and manor to Mr. John Bateman, whose grandson, Mr. James Bateman, F.R.S., purchased the old Hall and its adjacent grounds. Subsequently these were sold to Mrs. Stanier, of Madeley Manor, the present owner. The curious old farm homestead, nestling under the north wing of the ruins, is built of the stone and *debris* of the original structure. This is still habitable, and was the home for many generations of the old and respected family of Myott. Mr. Robert Bateman,[c] a son of the former owner, was the latest tenant.

The spot selected for the site of this venerable manor house overlooks an expanse of delightful scenery. The ground sloping away in undulating tracks, the winding stream, the Church tower peeping out above the trees, and the wooded banks of Whitemoor. All this, and more, greets the eye from the northern side of the moss-covered terrace, whilst from the south-east stretches the great barren track of Biddulph Moor.

Blocks of stone and flint-like bricks are the chief materials embodied in the ruins, remnants of which at the present day not imperfectly whisper a description of its original features. Here is the quaint pepper-box-shaped tower, its stone roof welded together with molten lead; the far-reaching walls disclosing here and there traces of winding stairs and partitions set apart

[b] Argent a chevron debruised between three crosses bottony fitched sable.

[c] Mr. Robert Bateman is known as a painter of much skill. The picture of "Saul and the Witch of Endor" exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1879 is one from his brush.

for dormitories; the huge fireplace and its great stone lintel, blackened with age and smoke, pointing out the spacious banqueting hall: the ample proportions of bays and oriels, their battered gargoyles and frames; the beautiful archway[d] of Venetian character admitting to what was once the quadrangle or courtyard; and facing this, an even plateau suggests at once an archery ground or bowling alley.

The date of the hall's partial destruction is traceable to 1644, when the siege of Nantwich was broken up, its besiegers dispersed, and the Parliamentary army under Sir Wm. Brereton marched across from thence to this neighbourhood, staying at Astbury for the night. Of this incident, Mr. J. E. Bailey, F.S.A., an indefatigable antiquary and author of several works of genealogical value, collected a succinct account, which he has embodied in a paper entitled "*Biddulph Old Hall.*"[e] From this the following is reprinted:

"The defence of Biddulph Hall belongs to the year 1643–4. In August, 1643, Lord Capel was threatening Nantwich with an army, and Lancashire and Staffordshire sent troops for the better defence of that town. Capel however fell back. 'The moorland dragoons,' part of the troops sent to give assistance, came as far as Haslington, where they quartered on the 5th August. 'In their return,' says Burghall, the Puritan vicar of Acton, 'they gave a strong alarm to Mr. Biddulph's house in Staffordshire, where was a garrison. This Biddulph,' adds the diarist, 'was a great Papist,' a name of reproach which often covered many good Protestants. Towards the turn of the year the Royalists suffered a series of reverses in Cheshire. They were foiled in an attack upon Northwich, where General Fairfax defeated them. On the 4th February the army of the Parliament took Crewe Hall, and three days later Doddington Hall. The surrender of Adlington Hall occurred 14th February, and on the 25th Mr. Tatton's house at Wythenshaw was taken. Meanwhile, consequent upon the defeat of the besiegers of Nantwich and the raising of the siege (24th January), William, second Lord Brereton of Brereton, who had collected magazines and arms for the king's service, became alarmed, and forsook his own mansion and fled with his wife and son to Biddulph Hall, which he put in a better posture of defence. Thackeray somewhere declares that the bitterest enmities are found amongst relations. It is said that had Lord Brereton remained at his own house he would not have been molested; but his resort to Biddulph Hall so roused the anger of his uncle, Sir

[d] Here is the date, 1580. Doubt exists about the last figure, some antiquaries declaring it an "8." This I have carefully examined, and am constrained to write it as above.

[e] Read before the Manchester Literary Club, 19 July, 1879.

William Brereton, the active Cheshire commander, afterwards major-general of the district, that he marched from Stafford to take it. Upon his way one of the unlovely elements in the Puritan character manifested itself at Astbury Church, which was turned into a stable; the stained windows were broken, and the organ was burned in a field called Organfield to this day. After this exploit the soldiers, as mayhap they 'hummed a surly hymn,' set out for Biddulph over Congleton Edge, and laid siege to the Hall on the 20th February, 1643–4. The troops were quartered on the surrounding tenantry, and provisions and labour were obtained by exactions. The walls of the Hall being too weak to resist artillery, bags of sand and of other materials were spread over them. The ordnance was at first planted at Congleton Edge, but little or no mischief was done from that standpoint. A fragment of an old song is remembered in which Lord Brereton, seeing Sir William on the Edge, is made to say:—

> Yonder my uncle stands, and he will not come near,
> Because he is a Roundhead, and I a Cavalier.

Burghall asserts that the Hall held out for a long time, and another authority fixes the period at three months. During this time the investment was pretty close. Communication with the neighbourhood is said to have been held by means of a servant appropriately named 'Trusty,' who had nightly egress by an underground passage, through which victuals were taken in. The Parliamentary army frequently changed the position of their camp. Meanwhile the garrison became expert marksmen. A person riding through Whitemore Wood towards the army at Congleton Edge had his horse struck by a shot, and the rider took to his heels, not staying to remove the horse's bridle. It is also said that when Mr. Bowyer, of Knypersley Hall, was galloping over Bradley Green, a ball from Biddulph took off the heel of his boot. At length the besieging party fetched from Stafford a large cannon bearing the feminine name of 'Roaring Meg,' which was planted on the west side. The gun was next tried on a battery on the rising ground on the east side, the country people having informed the general that that was the weakest side of the Hall. The old record says that from this site the artillerymen battered furiously for some time; that at last a ball accidentally struck the end of a beam supporting a portion of the Hall, thus giving the building such a shake that its defenders thought it would have fallen down; and that thereupon Lady Brereton was so much affrighted that at her earnest entreaty the place was surrendered. Lady Brereton had evidently none of the heroic spirit of that 'noblest of womankind,' who lent

> courage to the meanest hind
> That manned her castle walls.

The diary of Burghall confirms the old narrative, saying that at length the garrison asked quarter for life, which was granted. From both accounts we gather that the persons who were taken were, besides Lord and Lady Brereton and their son and heir, three

captains—Biddulph, Shakerley, and Minshull of Ardswick; three sons of Mr. Bellot, of Moreton Hall; Mr. Lockit, and about one hundred and fifty soldiers. There is a tradition that Francis Gosling of Biddulph was amongst the defenders. Three hundred stand of arms, with ammunition, also fell into the hands of the victors, who sacked the mansion and bore off the plunder to Stafford Castle. Thither, or to Shrewsbury Castle, the prisoners were taken; and Lord Brereton afterwards compounded for his estate by the payment of £1,739. Sir William Dugdale, then at Oxford, anxious for the fate of the house of one of his Staffordshire neighbours, notes its capture 22nd Februar, 1643–4, 'by y^e^ Rebells, under y^e^ comand of Colonell [John] Ashaulhurst (who had besieged the same from y^e^ time y^t^ y^e^ siege of Namptwich was rayscd), wherein was taken prisoners the Lord Brereton and 140 soldiers.'

"Amongst those in the Parliamentary service who were present at the surrender of the Hall was a Captain Smyth, afterwards Thomas Smyth, of the Middle Temple, London, gentleman. He, going into the house within an hour of its capture, noticed several writings of concernment in the custody of some of the soldiers, and some were torn and some thrown about and spoiled. With an eye to the value of such evidences, Smyth tried to dissuade the soldiers from destroying them; but they would not cease, and they carried many of them away. Margaret Biddulph, who was living at Biddulph in 1651, also saw the writings 'burnt, consumed, or plundered by the soldiers.'

"It is said that the Hall likewise suffered great damage from the country people, who were enraged at the long-continued depredations of the besiegers. The doors were burned for the sake of the iron, the moveables were taken away, and soon nothing was left save the walls and two towers. One tower alone now remains, and a finished wood engraving of it is to be found in Garner's *Natural History of the County of Stafford*, 1844, p. 127.

"When the local ill-feeling had time to subside, the valour of Lord Brereton, Captain Biddulph, and his friends, found celebration in a ballad which ridiculed the Parliamentary captains. Of one of them, named Watson, the type of a military dandy, it is said that while late one night going from Congleton to Congleton Edge he fell into a moss-pit. His exclamations make one suppose that he had been with the army in Flanders:—

> "'Zounds!' says Captain Watson, so brave and so stout,
> When he fell in the moss-pit and could not get out.
> 'What must I do? Zounds! I fear I'm undone,
> For I have spoiled my brown boots and spoiled my dragoon.'"

Such is the eventful history of Old Biddulph Castle, as we Congleton folk love to call it. Now every sight and sound is suggestive of restful quietude, and as the visitor turns away from these crumbling stones, pensive, it may be, with the reminiscences they wake up, should curiosity lead him down the sloping bridle-path seen from the principal entrance, he will shortly enter

a very paradise of woodland scenery. Known as the Clough, a gentle ravine circles the lower grounds of the old Castle. Here artistic effect has aided nature in creating one of the prettiest retreats it is possible to conceive. Trickling down from fragments of shelving rock and forming miniature cascades and shadowy basins the whole length of the Clough is a little stream which gradually widens in its fall. Overhanging trees lap their branches in one almost continuous arbour; lichens and mosses grow in luxuriant profusion; and in summer the whole wealth of Fern-land puts forth its beauty to complete a picture worthy of the *Dargle* itself. Strangers usually visit the ruins, and, oblivious of its existence, pass on without a glimpse of the Clough; but of late years artists have discovered its hidden retreat, and now brush and canvas and photographic art combine to make its romantic beauty more famous and widely known.

Before quitting these parts a few words may be said of the extensive moorland adjoining. Biddulph Moor bears a wild and barren look, and consists of an immense tract of sterile land reaching far out into Stafford County. The race of people inhabiting hereabouts retain among themselves a somewhat reserved and morose mode of living. Tradition assigns some interesting accounts of their origin. One of the lords of Biddulph who fought in the Third Crusade is said to have brought over seven Saracen captives from the Holy Land. The same knight fell at the Siege of Constantinople; and the Saracens, who had become attached to their Crusader-lord and reconciled to their lives here, married Biddulph women; and from these sprang the peculiar race of Biddulph Moor people.

The Mace.

AT Congleton, to commemorate the setting up of England's Commonwealth, a new Mace had been purchased with money left "for the use of the poore of Congleton" by Joane Davis, of London. This interesting item of history first saw the light some fourteen years ago, the Congleton Mace up to that date having enjoyed the reputation of being a "bauble"

set up by the inhabitants out of joy at the Restoration of Charles II.: bearing as it does the inscription "TO THE FREEDOME OF ENGLAND BY GOD'S BLESSING RESTORED."

In the year 1872, by request of Mr. Thomas Hughes, F.S.A., of Chester, the Congleton Mace was submitted to that gentleman to enable him to add its description to those of several other Cheshire Maces in a Paper[a] of which he was the author. Accompanying the Mace was a letter from Mr. John Wilson, LL.D., Town Clerk of Congleton, briefly illustrating its traditionary history. Of this the following are a few extracts:

"No doubt we had a mace-bearer and a Mace from James I.'s Charter; but as to the corporate Mace of James I. our local records say nothing. The accounts for five years of the rebellion time are deficient, though there are frequent resolutions recorded calling on the republican Mayors of the period to produce them. However, this by the way. So overjoyed was Congleton at the Restoration that the Corporation (having excluded the Republican members) at once bought the handsome silver gilt Mace, which you will see, with the inscription, 'To the Freedome of England by God's blessing restored. C.R., 1661.' The words seem suggestive of a foregone period of much local tyranny and oppression by the dominant military police. It may be inferred, as a new Mace was wanted, that the old one had been sold as a bauble during the non-accounting period, and the money applied to liquidate some military extortion or other."

On a careful examination, Mr. Hughes, whose authority on Silver Plate and assay marks has seldom been questioned, stumbled upon a discovery which he set forth in the following correspondence:

"I observed that the royal arms within the *corona*, if not indeed the crown as a whole, had been either rivetted, screwed, or soldered on, to the bulb, and that the inscription we had all viewed with such interest had been in like manner tampered with at a very early period. Nor was this all. Among the many antiquarian hobbies that have afflicted me from time to time, a leading one has been the study of Silver Plate, and the assay marks that usually accompany it. The experience thus acquired has stood me in good stead on more occasions than one, as I may some day explain to you more freely and fully.

"Let it suffice to say here that, the demon of doubt having once obtained the mastery, an antiquary's eye was soon wandering about in search of the assayer's mark,—that most potent of evidences,—a very Shibboleth indeed to the uninitiated,—but which speaks to the connoisseur in a silent language that cannot lie. And there, half-

[a] "Corporate Insignia of Cheshire."

THE MACE.
From a Drawing by MR. C. WILSON.

hidden by the chasing that adorns the bulb, the mystic sign appeared, in the shape of an early text-capital O which, on turning to Chaffer's *Hall-Marks on Plate*, I at once identified as the London assay mark of 1651. Just therefore as it would be impossible for an episcopal act of Bishop Jacobson's, to-day, to bear the autograph signature of the late Bishop Graham, so was it penally impossible for a Mace made in 1661 to bear the Goldsmiths' Hall 'touch' of ten years previously.

"Here then was a dilemma. If the Town Clerk of Congleton, and the traditions of his borough, were correct, then the tables compiled by Mr. Chaffers, under the eye of authority, were wrong,—a result I knew from other evidence to be impossible. There was nothing left, therefore, but to conclude that local tradition was at fault, and that this handsome Mace, instead of being a royalist emblem, due to Congleton's wild joy at the Restoration of Charles II., was in reality manufactured in 1651, during the rule of Oliver Cromwell,—he who but two years afterwards, drove its fellow from the House of Commons, with the imperious words, 'Take away that bauble!'

"This ugly discovery was afterwards embodied in a paragraph, tacked on to the newspaper report of my lecture, in the following terms:—'To what my valued correspondent has said, I must place one curious fact upon record. The assay mark on this Congleton Mace proves it to have been manufactured in London in 1651, just ten years before it was purchased by the corporation; unless, indeed, it was sent back again to London to have the inscription added or altered at the Restoration. My own opinion is that it was actually bought and in the borough's possession soon after 1651; that the inscription it originally bore, ran simply 'The Freedome of England by God's blessing restored,' alluding to the then recent overthrow of the monarchy; and that soon after the Restoration the words 'To' and 'C.R. 1661' (which are not in the original line) were added; thus converting a seditious into the eminently loyal inscription we now find upon the Mace It is the only Commonwealth specimen I have thus far met with in this district.'"

This discovery was made known to Mr. Wilson, who, jealous for the honour of his native town, and believing as implicitly as his predecessors had the loyal origin of our handsome Mace, determined on a careful search into the old Town Records. And there the whole matter was brought to light, and was embodied in a letter to Mr. Hughes, of which the following are a few telling extracts:

"The discovery you have made about the actual date of our Congleton Mace was at first very perplexing; and I confess that incredulity was largely mixed with the consternation with which I received the unwelcome correction of our local ideas. That a Mace, shewing every emblem of royalty and loyalty, speaking of 'restoration,' and bearing the date of 1661, should have been substantially made ten years earlier, when the blood of King

Charles was scarcely dry, and when all England lay under the heel of military tyranny, was very difficult to believe; and nothing could make it credible except the fact. You said that the assay mark (an old Text O, resembling the Greek Omega) is certain proof that the Mace bearing it was made in a particular year, that year being 1651; and your induction led us up to the actual state of the case. No doubt your proof is certain. But there may be no harm in corroborating the intrinsic by external evidence, and so riveting the reality. I have therefore been rummaging among old loose papers (the Books give no evidence to this point), and I have found the following:—

MEMORANDA REFERRING TO THE TOWN ACCOUNTS, 1651.

"This is to be annexed to the accounts of John Buckley, Alderman, for the yeare of our lord god, 1651, as followeth:—

Received from Henery feild, Sergant Barber of the Cittie of London, fiftie pound, which was left by Joane Davis, of the same Cittie for the use of the poore of Congleton	
Disburst the same as followeth:	
Payd to Alderman Richard Parnell for money layd downe for the *mace*	25 00 00
Payd likewise money left in the Morallitie of Alderman Holliday to the same Alderman Parnell	15 00 00
Paid to the aforesayd Alderman in part of A bond of thirtie pound, M. Poynton in his Maralltie payd the remainder	10 00 00
Soe the whole fiftie pound came to the hands of Alderman Richard Parnell, now Maior	

This acct for the above said sum of ffifty pound is approved of by me
Sep. 10, 561 (sic.) RICHARD PARNELL, Maior.

"So much for 1651. This plainly enough proves when and how we got our present Mace. The next set of extracts will show how we made it respectable:—

From the Accounts of George Forde, Mayor in 1661.

3 April.	Payd Edward Horderne for going to Chester, to get the Statute seale new cutt	00 03 00
7 ,,	Given Mr. Walley [town clerk] to send for cutting ye seale ...	00 09 00
30 May.	Paid Mr. Roger Kent [Swan Hotel] yt. was expended 29 May	00 16 00
15 June.	Spent on myselfe, John Goddad, Mr. Walley, and Richard Hall, and ye goldsmyth and his friend, beeing 6 in number, at Middlewych, about *renewing ye mace*	00 10 08
29 June.	Payd for 6 yards of silke & silvr ribyn bestowed by ye deputy Maior on some gentlemen at ye Coronation day	00 09 00
	Payd Roger Kent for beare for ye gentlemen yt attended at Pclamation of ye Coronation	00 10 00
	Payd on the Coronation day for gunpowder	00 17 08
	Payd Four Drummers	00 08 06
	,, the Ringers	00 08 00
,, ,,	Payd for Lonwds and Pickford [innkeepers]	00 14 00
,, ,,	Payd Mrs. Rowe, Randle Booth, Roger Kent, and Goodall [innkeepers] for drink and wyne	03 11 00
,, ,,	More beside	00 01 10
15 Oct.	Payd to ye Goldsmyth for *Altering ye Mace*	03 00 00
1662.	Recd. from ye Goldsmyth for old Gold & Silver yt Mr. fford sold	00 04 00

The above extracts tell the whole story, and rather more. I could not, in fact, help putting down a few items which, though not expressly concerning the special subject, tend certainly in some degree to its illustration.

"Here, then was the Mace made and bought in 1651, as you found out; and altered by the addition of the royal insignia in 1661, as you suggested. Perhaps, for the credit of the old borough, we might have gone less into particulars, and possibly our corporate insignia might have had a more honourable origin. Yet we cannot suppose that it was meant to swallow up good old Joane Davis's benefaction of £50 to the 'poore of Congleton,' partly in paying Corporation debts, and partly in buying a grand new Mace to the honour and glory of Oliver Cromwell. It is, in fact, certain that the temporary and supplementary form of the account, or rather loose and detached memorandum, shews that the money was only *borrowed*, in order to supply Corporate exigencies, and to add to Corporate splendour: and that its interest at 5 per cent., viz. £2 10s., was regularly paid, and is paid yet, to the 'poore,' among the other borough charities.

"However, *that* was the beginning of the Congleton Mace, in the year which you specified; a new 'bauble' bought with charity money for the adornment of Republican simplicity! In like manner, the accounts of Alderman George Forde, the first Tory Mayor of the Restoration, are at once conclusive as to how the royal emblems came on the Mace; and are also very suggestive about a good many other things. No doubt Congleton, with its fireworks, its drummers, its ringers, and its open public-houses, was very wild on that Coronation Day, and from the 29th of May the year before,—as all England was likewise. Days of bright hope, followed by years of sad disappointment! The selfish and unprincipled Charles was more beloved than any of his predecessors for a hundred years. Nay, England has had to wait for 212 years, until this happy 1872, for an ebullition of loyal joy. [on the Prince of Wales's recovery] such as greeted that Prodigal's return!

"The closer examination of the Mace, which you recommended, shews that the second 6 in 1661 has been brazed and soldered on the place of a removed figure, no doubt of 5. And the word 'TO' at the *end* (as the 'rose' shews), and not at the beginning of the inscription, has palpably been brazed on in lieu of two other initial letters. What could they be? 'O.C.' possibly?—or the initials of the Mayor of the time—Buckley or Parnell? I think when 'TO' was afterwards put there, it was meant, (in spite of the rose) to read on—'TO THE FREEDOME OF ENGLAND BY GOD'S BLESSING RESTORED,'—for although C.R. is stuck on just above, it is nonsense to speak of the freedom, &c., being restored to the King. It remains however clear, both from the small price paid to 'ye goldsmyth' in 1661, and from the alteration in this word 'TO,' that the principal inscription was on the Mace in 1651, and that the misguided souls who bought it fancied that the cutting off of their King's head in 1649 had restored 'freedome' to England. However, before 10 years were over, they had found out their error.

"In my letter to you of the 2nd instant, among other blunders, I

said that the Corporation 'having expelled its Republican Members,' bought the new Mace. In point of fact, I find that the Republican Members were not removed until by the action of a Royal Commission, which sat in Congleton on the 8th September, 1662. It is recorded that Aldermen Henshaw, Parnell, Buckley, and Poynton, with Tobias Parnell and four other Common Councilmen, and Jonathan Walley, the Town Clerk, having refused to take the oaths of allegiance to King Charles, were removed from their respective offices, and nine persons of loyal character inducted; Roger Wilcockson being appointed Town Clerk. Alderman John Latham, though he had been twice Mayor during the Commonwealth, and was evidently a main member of the republican junta who ruled the Borough for fourteen years, made no difficulty in taking the oaths to the restored Government. The Town Clerk, Mr. Jonathan Walley, though he obeyed orders in getting the old Seal re-cut, and the Mace loyalised, was evidently a Republican of the sourest sort. I don't know whether it may be attributed to his dislike of owning any Superior, here or elsewhere (it could not be for want of education), that in the Memorandum of 1651 he spelled the Divine Name with small initials, while the Aldermen were dignified with capitals. We remember that even Dogberry expressed more ideas of veneration than this (however elondy his general apprehension), in his famous direction to his chief Secretary of Police—'Write down that they fear God; and write God first; for God defend but God should go before such villains.'

"George Ford, the first Mayor of the Restoration, appears to have been an energetic fellow. Previously unknown in the Corporation, no doubt kept out as a 'Malignant,' he hit the right moment, and got himself made Capital Burgess, Alderman, and Mayor, all within a fortnight from the 14th to the 28th September, 1660; and, having collected round him some of the old 'Church and King' members, long silenced before, and infused some new blood of the same sort, he soon re-asserted the old ascendancy of the real, but long cowed, majority of the borough. By trade he was a mercer. But the coming change had cast its foreshadow, and the commonalty of Congleton were in advance of their rulers in political courage. By the charter of James I., the burgesses had the choice of the Mayor from among the Aldermen, and this choice was always exhibited by a shout in the Town Hall. In September, 1658, to the horror of the Puritan rulers, the commonalty met and voted the Mayoralty to John Hobson, a stout old Royalist, whereupon their choice was coolly set aside; Richard Parnell was made Mayor for the third time; and a thundering resolution was passed, as follows, against the rebellious burgesses who presumed to think for themselves:—'Though the ffreemen of the sayd Burrough were publiquely acquaynted that, by the order of this Assembly, the sayd John Hobson and others were incapable to be elected Maior or Justice of the Peace, yett, notwythstandynge, some of the capitall burgesses and ffreemen very rudelye and frowardly, by many contemptuous speeches and high measure, did not onely villifie the sayd order, and declare it to bee illegal, null, and voyde, and a sureptitious order [which no doubt it was],

but very wilfully and considerately (!) voated against the same, and with much earnestness pursued their sayd voates, &c., &c.'—the result of this long rigmarole being to threaten the loyal majority of the townspeople with pains and penalties of unknown severity. The next year, 1659, Buckley was made Mayor (2nd time), but he dying in June, 1660, a month after the King's return, no further reticence was kept; but the old loyal Hobson was shouted into the mayoralty for the year out, till September, by fierce acclamation; and on the very same day another old silenced Alderman, John Walker, was ordered to come back to the Council and 'to bee *in statu quo prius* as at any tyme heretofore.' "

The Parnells.

IT is somewhat remarkable that while so many family names occurring here in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are still perpetuated in the town and neighbourhood, not one remains of that of Parnell. Though not a county family they were of long standing and influence in the town, and their names have been traced on deeds dating as far back as Henry VIII.'s time. Little is known of them until the appearance of THOMAS PARNELL as Mayor in the time of James I., in whose reign he was also chosen by the King's Letters Patent to be one of the eight newly-elected Aldermen of Congleton. His career has been spoken of by past historians, and considering he was the ancestor of men who became more or less famous, I think he may be justly styled the founder of the Congleton family.

Adjoining the curious half-timbered Guild Hall, in an establishment as curious in its construction as the old Hall itself, lived this Thomas Parnell, Alderman and Mayor, and carried on the trade of mercer or draper.[a] He had four sons, William, Tobias, Thomas, and Richard, whose baptisms in the Astbury Parish Register are thus recorded:

1594 Dec. xxvi. die, Willus filius Tho: Parnell de Congl: fuit bap.
1600 xv. die (Feb.) Tobias fil Thomæ Parnel de Congl: fuit bapt.
1606 October eodem die (xxvi.) Tho. fil Thome Parnel de Congl fuit bapt.
1610 primo die Aprilis Ricdus fil Thome Parnell.

WILLIAM PARNELL, the eldest, went to London, where he died childless. Thomas, Tobias, and Richard remained in

[a] In a Fine dated 3 Sept., James I., he is styled "Thomas Parnell, Gentleman."

Congleton, and, following their father's example, devoted themselves to matters concerning the town. There is every reason to believe that they became familiar acquaintances of Bradshaw, betwixt whom and themselves, at one time, municipal matters were mostly managed.

Tobias Parnell, the second son, was a gilder or decorative painter, and although never elected Mayor, there is every reason to suppose that he was one of the monied men of the times. In the record of his burial at Astbury he is styled "Tobias Parnell, de Congleton, Alderman." He is known as the ancestor of Dr. Thomas Parnell, the poet, and of the other members of the Parnell family since known to fame, including the conspicuous "Home Ruler" of to-day.

The history of Thomas Parnell, the third son, is singularly meagre. He was invested with the freedom of the town, and for several years appeared at the meetings of the Corporation as a Common Councilman. He disappeared from Congleton after the dispersion of its republican rulers, and was not heard of again until 1662, when he received a pardon from Charles II. He was living at that time in London.

Richard Parnell, the youngest, attained the greatest position of importance. He has been described as a Cromwellian man, because of the active part he took against the Church and King party. Three times he was chosen Mayor, being elected the third time by the Republican members of the Council in direct opposition to the wishes of the Commonalty, whose shouts, despite the existing bye-law excluding all "Malignants" from any municipal office, were given for old John Hobson, a well-known Royalist, a year before the Restoration.

Tobias Parnell died 16 January, 1653, having had seven sons and three daughters. The following are their names, taken from the Astbury register:

1624 October primo die Gulielmus[b] fil Tobias Parnell de Cong. bap.
1625 xxx Die (December) Thomas fillius Tobiæ Parnell de Congleton bapti.
1626 December xxviij William fillius Tobias Parnell de Congleton fnit bapt.
1628 xxviij die (October) Tobias[c] fill Tobiæ Parnell de Congl bapt.
1630 xxviij die (October) Anna fill Tobiæ Parnell de Congl bapt.
1632 January x die Ric fill Tobias Parnell.
1633 xxvii Jo: fill Tobia Parnell.

[b] Died two days after.

[c] He is the man mentioned in the Commission of 1662 as having refused to take the oath of allegiance to King Charles, see page 51.

1635 Edw: fill Tobiæ Parnell.
1636 20 Die Sept. Elizb.[d] fill Tobiæ Parnell.
1638 Dec. xv Attiwell fill Tobiæ Parnell.

Thomas, second son of Tobias Parnell, claims a special place in this history, inasmuch that he was the father of Dr. Thomas Parnell, the poet; and the personal friend of Bradshaw. His name is found in the President's will, from which it appears that Bradshaw appointed, along with two other persons, his "trustie servant, Thomas Parnell," as trustee and executor. At the Restoration he removed to Ireland, where he married and purchased an estate in the County Wicklow, where the poet, Thomas, was born.

Thomas Parnell, D.D. and poet, as has been stated, was the eldest son of Thomas Parnell, and grandson to Tobias Parnell, the Congleton painter. He was born in Dublin, in 1679, and educated at Trinity College. When twenty years old he had gained the degree of M.A., and directly afterwards was ordained Deacon. In the year 1705 he was appointed Archdeacon of Clogher, and, being subsequently introduced by his friend Dean Swift to Archbishop King, he received from the Archbishop a Prebend's stall in 1713, and the vicarage of Finglas, near Dublin, in 1716. He married Ann Minchin, a lady said to be of great beauty and amiability of character, who predeceased him. By her he had three children, one only, a daughter, surviving him. His gifted life, owing to the effects of grief occasioned it is said by the early death of his wife, was cut short at the age of thirty-eight. He died at Chester, in July of the year 1717, where in Trinity Church of that old city, unmarked by either slab or monumental brass, his remains lie buried. Pope, Gray, and Addison were among his friends. Dr. Johnson and Goldsmith were his biographers. His works proclaim him a poet of no mean order: the principal being—"Hesiod," "The Vigil of Venus," "The Hermit," "An Elegy to an old Beauty," "An Allegory on Man."

John Parnell, the Irish Judge, who succeded to the family estate, was the younger brother of the poet. From him sprang the Right Hon. Sir Henry Brooke Parnell, a Baronet of Ireland, and M.P.; a statesman of some repute under Lord Melbourne's administration. He was created Baron Congleton

[d] Died and was buried 1638, Nov. 4th.

in the year 1841, choosing the title from his ancestral and propertied connection with the old borough.[c] He married Lady Caroline Elizabeth Dawson, eldest daughter of the first Earl of Portarlington, by whom he had issue three sons and two daughters. On his death June 8th, 1842, he was succeeded in the title and property by his eldest son, John Vesey Parnell.

John Vesey Parnell was born 16 June, 1805, and was educated at the University of Edinburgh. He married, first in 1831, Nancy, daughter of Mr. Cronin; secondly in 1833, an Armenian lady, Khatoon, youngest daughter of Ovanness Moscow, of Shiraz, and widow of Yoosoof Constantine, of Bushire, (she died in May, 1865): and thirdly in 1867, Margaret Catherine, only daughter of the late Mr. Charles Ormerod, of the Indian Board: by whom he had one daughter, the Hon. Sarah Cecilia Parnell, born in 1868. Lord Congleton died 23rd October, 1883, and, failing male issue, the title passed to his brother, the Hon. Henry William Parnell.

The Hon. Henry William Parnell, the third Lord Congleton, late Lieutenant R.N., was born in 1809. He married in 1835, Sophia, only daughter of the late Colonel the Hon. William Bligh. She died in 1846. For his second wife, he married, in 1851, his cousin, the Hon. Caroline Margaret, eldest daughter of the late Hon. Lionel Charles Dawson, maid of honour to the Queen, and niece of the Earl of Portarlington.

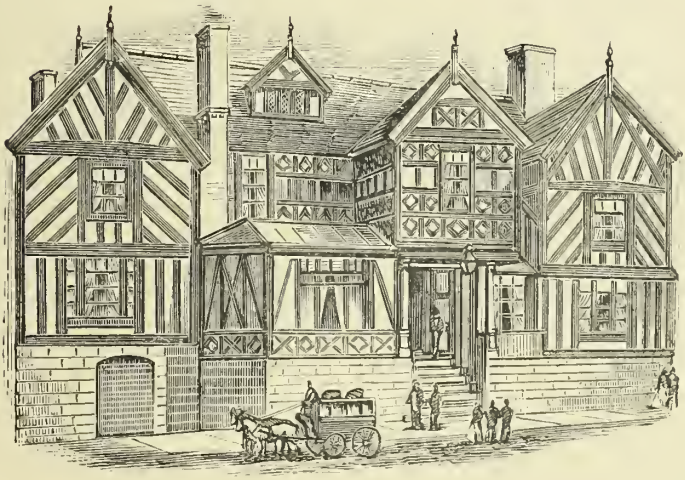
Since Charles II. was restored to the throne the Parnells have gradually vanished from Congleton, and become scattered in different parts of England and Ireland. The heads of the family have however always retained portions of their property in and near Congleton. At the present time Lord Congleton owns a small farm estate situated near the Clond, which, by the will of one of his ancestors, dated 16 July, 1622, is charged with an annuity of £5 to be spent in gifts of bread and money to the poor of Congleton. Only a few years back the Corporation purchased from the late lord a block of building occupying the

[c] Congleton appears to have given name to a family probably during the tenure of the manor by the Ardernes in the thirteenth century. 9 Edward II., Alexander de Congleton occurs in a Recognizance to William de Modburleigh. 20 Edward III., Thomas de Congleton, and Cecily his wife, possessed lands in Great Meoles. John de Congleton was grantee of a pardon, 9 & 10 Richard II.—*Ormerod.*

site of the old family house adjoining the Town Hall. A plot of land in Park Lane still bears the name Parnellscroft.[f] In one of the Record Books of the town appears the following notice: "1763, 13 July, John Parnell of the Kingdom of Ireland, Esq^re^ was admitted and sworn a ffreeman of this Borough."

The Cheshire Sheaf, (374, Nov. 1878,) has the following note concerning the election of the Mayor of Chester on 24th May, 1644, (20 Charles I.): "There were three candidates nominated, between two of whom, Mr. Thomas Parnell and Mr. Randle Holme, the struggle ran through two or three successive votings: ultimately the half-hearted Royalist, but afterwards republican Parnell was well beaten by the loyal-to-the-backbone Randle Holme. Mr. Parnell was of Congleton extraction, and the poet Parnell, Archdeacon of Clogher, whose bones reposed in the old Church of the Holy Trinity, Chester, was of the same family."

[f] On which the late Mrs. Reddall erected a pleasant villa, now inhabited by Mr Edward Pamphilon.



Lion and Swan Inn.
In the 19th Century.

Annals of the Town.

A SKIRMISH between the burgesses of Congleton and a company of Lesley's cavalry occurred in 1651. The soldiers, who were retreating after their defeat at Worcester, had been well beaten by the inhabitants of Sandbach, and forced to march on to Congleton, where they encamped during Thursday night "on a green hill not far distant from the town, and there rested, lying close together a great part of that night: but before the day appeared they were alarumed by the country; whereupon having discharged a piece, and made a holla, they departed."[a]

CONCERNING TOLLS.

IN 1657 the inhabitants obtained an Injunction against their neighbours of Macclesfield, restraining them from levying Tolls on those attending the Fairs and Markets there. From the examination of witnesses some amusing and interesting information is obtained.

One, Ralph Worth, then of Over Alderley, but formerly of Congleton, where he was apprenticed for seven years to a "Habardasher," deposed that his master, who at that time carried "hatts" to Macclesfield for sale, refused to pay Stallage,

[a] Ormerod's "Cheshire," Helsby's edition, vol. iii., page 104.

"whereuppon the tolle receivers in Macclesfeild took from his said master a hatt because he refused to pay stallage." He also stated "that the Salters of Congleton, whoe were inhabitants there, did constantly pay Pickage in Macclesfeild for the Salte which they brought thither to sell." John Smallwood, Sexton of Macclesfield, affirmed "that hee is and hath beene ffarmer of some of the tolles of Macclesfeild for ffourteen years laste paste (that is to saye) of all standinges which pay a halfe-penny a daye for theire pickage, and althoe that hee hath gone from stall to stall to receive it, And that hee hath received twoe pence for tolle of a Cowe, foure pence for tolle of a horsse, a penny for a Swine, a penny for a Cowe hyde, foure-pence a score for Calve skinns, and foure-pence a score for Sheepe skinns, And sayth that the Inhabitants of Congleton have constantly paid for the pickage and stallage of theire goodes in Macclesfeild, and perticulerly Alderman Latham of Congleton, M^r^ Rowe, Roger Spencer, Alderman Walker's sonne, and Alderman Henshawe's sonne, all of Congleton, and Alexander Greene, Burgesse of Congleton, have usually paid tolle for goodes they brought into Macclesfeild. And further sayth that Alderman Walker hath severall tymes boughte skinnes in Macclesfeild and once did hange them by William Rylands with intencon to convey them in Bread bakers pannyers ont of Macclesfeild to avoyd paymente of tolle, but this Dep^ont^ sayth that hee seeinge the aforesaid skinnes and heareinge whose they were this Dep^ont^ distrained on one of the skinns and tooke it and kepte it because the sayd Alderman Walker would not pay tolle, and since then Alderman Walkers sonne hath boughte hydes in Macclesfeild, and this Dep^ont^ demandeinge tolle of him, he answered that the skinne which this Dep^ont^ tooke of his ffather was not yet runne upp for tolle."

William Knight of Newbold Astbury, husbandman, deposes "that about twenty yeares since hee this depon^t^ beinge at a ffayre at Macclesfeilde with one M^r^ George Forde, Burgess and Mercer of Congleton, whoe had a Mare there to be sould which not being sould was led downe the street there by this depon^t^ whoe was demanded tolle for the said Mare, by the tolle gatherer of Macclesfeild, which tolle beinge denyed they came to M^r^ Bancrofte, one of the Aldermen of Macclesfeilde, who tould them that noe tolle was to bee paid for that mare, because the Burgesses of Congleton were free from tolle at Macclesfeild."

SCOTCH REBELLION, 1745.

CONGLETON experienced much of the excitement caused to the country during Charles Edward's attempt, by force of arms, to assert his claim to the British throne. On Dec. 1, 1745, he marched his army by different routes from Manchester to Macclesfield. One hundred horse came into the town about 11 in the morning, and ordered the Bellman to prepare quarters for five thousand men. These, including the artillery, came in about 2 o'clock, and stayed one night; a vanguard of about 200 men being quartered at Broken Cross.

Of the despatches issued in the "Gentleman's Magazine,"[b] the following is an extract concerning the movement of troops in these parts:

"By letters of the 2nd, there are advices that the party which lay at Altringham the night before, marched early that morning towards Macclesfield, from which place about 2000 foot pass'd by Gawsworth at ten; that 2000 horse and foot came into Congleton between three and four in the afternoon, who gave out that the pretender, with the remainder of the troops, would be there that evening. A small party of about 30 were detached to a place called Astbury, two or three miles on the Newcastle side of Congleton. Their horses are very small, lean, and of different colours."

Yates, in his "History of Congleton," page 49, writes:

"Congleton was entered by a detachment of the rebel army, about 1300 strong, commanded by Lord George Murray. They marched into the town, and compelled the Mayor, in all his formalities, to proclaim their Prince at the market-cross. They remained all night, and early the next morning marched away to rejoin the main body at Leek. During their short stay they searched for, and seized whatever arms they could find, lived gratuitously with respect to food and lodging, but did no injury to any person. Some of their followers, however, were guilty of several acts of plunder in the town. Part of the royal army soon afterwards passed through in pursuit of the rebels, and the decisive battle of Culloden, fought on the 16th of April following, completely quelled the rebellion."

The following extracts concerning the Pretender's army when at Macclesfield are from a series of interesting letters issued some years ago in a local Newspaper.[c] These letters, since published by Mr. Earwaker in his "East Cheshire," were written by Mr. John Stafford, a Macclesfield Attorney:

[b] Vol. xv., page 621.

[c] *Macclesfield Courier.*

The 1st instant [December, 1745], about 10 o'clock, we had notice from the country people that the Rebells were within a quarter of a mile of the town.....When the first emotion of my own fright was a little abated, I ventured to peep out of a Garret window, but seeing my wife and her two sisters below at the Gates shame rousd my courage, and I ventured to stand by 'em, and saw the whole army pass by my own door, except a regiment of Horse commanded by Lord Elcho, and some forces which came in late. But those I saw the next day. The quarter masters first came into town, who, with their Guard, were abont 20 in number. They rode to the cross and enquired for the Constables.....They enquir'd for Sir P. Davenport's house,—whether he was in town or not, and being answ'd, not, they gave him a Curse, and asked when he left it, and soon afterwards rode to his house, and after viewing it inside and out, marked the door with the word 'Prince.' I had now so much valour that I ventured to speak to one of the best of 'em, and enquir'd w^t^ number of forces wo'd be in Town that day. He answ'd 10,000, upon w^ch^ I returned home much dismayed. Immediately afterw^ds^ came in a Regiment of Horse by way of advance Guard, said to be commanded by the Duke of Perth; and in the 2nd or 3rd rank was the poor fellow (our clyent, Sampson Salt by name) who had been sent out as a Spy, guarded by 4 terrible fellows with their drawn swords. They soon found he was a Townsman, and that the eyes of the inhabitants were npon him. But fear had so metamorphosed our friend that his neighbonrs searce knew him. He was shorter by half a yard at least than the day before. If he cast an eye to the right—'D—n' (says a ruffian), 'you mnst not look that way.' If he looked to the left—'D—n ye, don't look that way,' so that he was forct to conduct his eyes directly betwixt the two ears of his palfry, and all the while his Guards kept laughing and pointing at him and to the people who beheld his distress. This regiment seem'd to be very poorly mounted. I believe for the most part they were on such horses as they pickt up in the Country as they came along, but many of the men were lusty clever fellows. Not long after this, came the foot in very regular order, with Bagpipes playing instead of drums, the Colloncls marching at the head of each of their respective regiments. And all the forces, as well Horse and Foot, were in Highland dress, except the Bodyguards, which wore blue trimmed with red. After about 4 or 5 Regiments had passed by us it was said the Prince was coming up. You may safely imagine we were all very attentive to see him, and it happen'd that a halt was made jnst opposite to my door for a minnte or two, which gave ns an opportnnity of having a very full view of him. He was in Highland Dress with a blue waisteote trim'd with silver, and had a blue Highland cap on, and was snrronnded by abont 40 who appeared as his Guard. He is a very handsome person of a man, rather tall, exactly proportioned, and walks very well—in my thinking not nnlike M^r^ N. Wetenhall, but his face is not markt with the small pox.....Soon after the P[rince]'s son came into Town and was got to his quarters at Sir P[eter]'s (which we now call Hollyrood Honse) an order came to the Mayor to proclaim the Pretender, and he and the Aldermen were directed to

attend in their formalities. I had 2 or 3 messages to have gone with my gown, but I sent word it was out of the way, but that I w^d come, for by this time I had got some of the Rebell Offieers in the House and many more at the gates, wateling the procession, amongst whom I stood out of curiosity, and therefore durst not say I would not go, for fear of being abused. By which means I escaped being present at so shocking a scene. Poor M^r Mayor was obliged to be at it, and I hear 2 or 3 of the Alderman. They made the Town Clerk repeat the Proclamation after 'em, and when it was over, they themselves gave an huzza or two, but I believe there was not one of our Townsmen joined them.....Many of the officers appeared very well—some few indeed were very old—in particular Glenbuckett, who seemed to be 80 at least, and bended almost double on horseback. Some of those who stood by us said he had been bedridden three years before the Prince's son arrived in Scotland, but he no sooner heard of his coming than he had a kind of new life and joined him with his whole clan and family, there being no less than his 2 sons, 2 grandsons, a great-grandson and a nephew along with him. Many of the common men, tho' dirty and shabby, were lusty fellows. There were many old men amongst the common soldiers and a great number of boys. The use intended to be made of the boys, who were to be armed with pistols and knives only, was upon an engagement to disorder the King's Cavalry by going amongst the ranks and cutting the legs of the horses. It was dark before the artillery came in, and as it grew duskish orders were given that the inhabitants should illuminate their houses upon pain of military exeention, upon which most of the houses were illuminated, but with great ill will.....As to their number, there was no judging of it from their March into the town, and they seem to be very artful in concealing their numbers. They bespoke billets for 10,000; and said 5,000 would come in the next day, but for my own part I dont think they exeeed 6,000 in the whole. All along as they marched they had parties Reconnoitering the Country for 8 or 10 miles round about. These parties, which are inconsiderable in number, and a regiment of horse commanded by Lord Elcho, who were quartered the day before at Prestbury, were all that eame into this town the next day, which instead of being 5,000 were far short of 500. And there was no forming any notion of their number by the billets, beeause in many places where 40 or 50 were billetted on a house not half the number eame, and others had double the number that were billetted on 'em.....The next morning [Monday, Dec. 2] I was very early abroad, and had the curiosity to step over the way to a poor neighbour's house who had above 50 common men quartered on him, to see how they lay. The house floor was covered with straw, and men, women, and children lay promiseously together like a kennel of hounds, and some of 'em stark naked. As soon as it was daylight the streets appeared in Edinburgh fashion.

1759. Over one hundred people died in Congleton of an infectious fever, said to have been transmitted from London in a bale of silk.

"On Thursday, the 10th of April, 1777, was executed at Chester, Samuel Thorley, a butcher's follower at Congleton, for the murder of Ann Smith, a ballad singer, aged 22."[d]

1784. The old wooden bridge over the river Dane, supported on six arches, each three yards wide, was this year taken down and the present substantial structure erected at a cost of £700.

1798. Much distress and poverty among the working classes. The Corporation at various times devoted sums of money towards their support. About this time an Act of Parliament was obtained enabling the authorities to enclose all commons and waste lands belonging to the Corporation: On Mossley Moss, 49a. 2r.; on Lower Heath, 24a. 0r. 3p.; and on West Heath, 105a. 1r. 39p. The whole to be invested in Trustees, the income to be devoted to lessening the rates of the town.

1814. This year a disastrous flood of the river Dane washed away the old wooden weir by the mill. The present substantial one of stone was constructed at a cost of £2000.

On Oct. 29, 1817, the boundaries of the borough and township were perambulated. The procession moved from the Town Hall, through the Market Place to Dane Bridge, and consisted of

Five Pioneers, carrying axes;
Forty boys, sons of the most respectable inhabitants, wearing cockades, and carrying small scarlet banners, inscribed "Congleton Boundaries Perambulated 29 Oct. 1817";
A Band of Music;
The Mayor's Sergeant, carrying the Mace;
The Mayor, (Mr. John Johnson) with the Lord of the Manor and the Mayor elect (Mr. John Skerratt) one on either side;
The Aldermen;
The Town Clerk (Mr. Chr'stopher Moorhouse) carrying a large map of the district;
The Capital Burgesses.

The Perambulation commenced near the river Dane, where the township of Congleton adjoins that of Hulme Walfield, and

[d] Poole's "Cheshire," vol. ii., page 650.

proceeded along the lines between Eaton, Buglawton, Biddulph, Astbury, Somerford, and Radnor, ending on the Hulme Walfield side of the river, where the perambulation began.

This is an old manorial custom, now almost fallen into disuse, but which in ancient days was annually observed. The earliest record of a Perambulation of the Congleton Boundaries is contained on a voluminous piece of parchment. This ancient Boundary Roll, which is one of the curiosities of the town muniments, sheds some interesting light upon several old landmarks, and illustrates the jealousy with which our forefathers held their corporate possessions.

Congleton. **The Boundarie of the Lordshipp of Congleton** presented by the jurie whose names are hereafter written as it was founde at a Court Leet there holden before the deputie Steward of Sir John Savage, Knight, in the month of September one thousand fyve hundred [and] nynty three, And in the fyve and thirtith year of the Raigne of the Late Queene Elizabeth, of famous Memorie.

The names of the Jurye.

THOMAS JOHNSON, Ald.
JOHN LATHAM
JOHN SMYTH, Ald.
JOHN HOBSON, th youngr, Ald.
MATTHEW MORETON, Ald.
JOHN CRESWALL, gent
JOHN HOBSON, th elder
RANDULL POYNTON
RICHARD DRAKEFORD
WILLIAM SUTTON
EDWARD BAYLIE
HUGH SPENCER
JOHN NEWTON
RAUFF STUBBES
RAUFF POYNTON

To witt beginning at the corner hedge at *Rodde lane* one the south syde of the *lower heath*, and soe followinge that south hedge near the north west end of a close in *Hulmewalfeild* called *Cattesoak*. And from thence northwards directlie to *Knowle* or banck upon the same heath neare to the said close, And soe dirictlie from that *Knowle* or banck straight over a new marpitt latlie made to Whittacar's *hedge* wch goeth South and North, And soe along from thence down to the corner of the hedge northwards, And from the said North of the same hedge along downe the hedge that abutteth East and Northwest to the cottage now in tenure of Robert Whittacar, And from that cottage dirictlie straight over the Queen's highway between *Eaton* and *Congleton* leadinge

from *Mareton* to *Congleton* to a hollow in a hedge of close in *Eaton* in tenure of Oliver Burges called *Blackfeild*, And soe from the same hollow following the East diche there to the grounde Eastwarde belonging to the Mesnage in tenure of Thomas Johnson, Alderman of Congleton.

John Hobson, the eldest, Alderman of Congleton, sworne and examined, and being aged fourescore yeares and more saieth That hee hath inhabited in Congleton duringe all his life tyme. And about fyftie two years past hee hath gotton turves upon the Comons from the Northwest end of a Close in Hulmewalfeild called *Cattesoake* &c.

Thomas Johnson, Alderman of Congleton, aged threescore and six yeares or thereabouts saieth as Alderman Hobson hath said, And further saieth that hee beinge an inhabitant of Congleton and his familye have alwaies from tyme to tyme when neede required repayred and amended the Qneenes high waie leading from *Congleton* to the Hall of *Eaton*.

Raffe Poynton the elder of Congleton yoman aged about threescore and eighteen yeares or thereabouts sworne and examined for his knowledge of the boundaries saieth That during all the tyme of his remembrance the lymits and boundaries betweene *Congleton* and *Astbury* from the west end of *Moreton Meadowes*, and the other landes of the inheritance of William Moreton, of *Hulmewalfeild*, gent are from the end of the ditch of water coming forth of the said *Moreton Meadowe* into *Wagges Lane* leading towards the *Marsh* along the dych side towardes *Astbury* leaveing the whole lane in *Congleton*, and soe following that dych to the Northwest end of Thomas Brownesworth's barne neere the *Marsh*, weh barne was there latelie builded, an saieth that during his remembrance untill of late tyme that it is now turned from that course, the water course from *Moreton Meadowe* hath usually runne along the dych to the said barne, and under the place where the north corner of the said barne now standeth, and that about the space or length of one foote of the said barne over the said dych is placed within the mannor or Lordshipp of *Congleton*, And that the water used to runne during his remembrance untill of late from the said barne end close to the bottom of the hedge or dich before the grounde whereon Thomas Brownsworth's house now standeth towardes the north west corner of a croft in *Astbury* now in the holding of Thomas Brownsworth called *Abotridge*, and from thence turneing westwardlie downe to the steppinge stones near the crofte in *Astbury* in tenure of William Hackney...And soe from those stepping stones the water course did during his remembrance untill of late tyme runne downe and along the dych of the *Ryefield* unto the place where the streete standeth above the dych leaving the footwaie from westheath in Congleton toward Astbury, and that

the said water course soe running that waie was in anneyant tyme and during this depo^ts remembrance until of late tyme the contrarie hath been affirmed by the owners and tenants of *Astbury*...And from thence northwardlie crossing the maine waie weh runneth over the middle of the heath called the westheath leading from *Congleton* towardes *Middlewch*, and soe following the said ould maine waie that leadeth towards *Radnor house* along the west end of John Latham's mosse roome, leaveing the great lacke (lake) eastwardlie, and crossinge the maine waie leading from *Congleton* towards *Sondford lane end*, towardes *Radnor bridge*, and then following the said old maine waie leading towardes *Radnor house* to the corner of the hedge or dich in *Radnor* of a close called *Poorfeild* to the gate leading to *Radnor* called *Radnor yate*, also further *Noggeyate* &c.

The deposition of another Burgess given some years afterwards relates to the Congleton Boundary in the Buglawton district. Of this the following is an extract, commencing where the line crosses the highway:

And along after the bottom of Hugh Wardle's hedge south east to the Queenes highwaie leadinge betweene *Congleton* and *Buglawton* over the stepping stones, And then crossing the said highwaie and following the bottom of the west hedge of Hugh Wardle's little pingle along the south hedge thereof, and soe following the bottom of the hedging on the East syde of *Davenynsale*[e] directlie Southward or Southeastward to the west end of a close in *Buglawton* in tennr of Henry Haworth, gent. called *Davonynsale-feild*. And soe following that hedge leaveing the pingle one the East syde of the Ryver to be in *Congleton* to the North end of a close of the inheritance of Rondull Rode, gent. called *Mylnefeild* in *Congleton*, And along the hedge on Buglâwton syde, and then crossing the Ryver at the North East corner of the said close called *Mylnefeild* along to the footbridge now standinge weh leadeth directlie upon John Boothes style, and because there are three litle pingles or wharfes, two one *Buglawton* syde beyond the Ryver, and the third one *Congleton* syde of the Ryver weh are made questionable to the Southend of the *Red banck* in the bottom of the *Mylnefeild* of the inheritance of the said Rondull Rode, betweene the said Rondull Rode and Henry Haworth, gent. wee referr yt to them to make triall of the boundaries betweene them at there pleasures, And then beginninge agayne at the South end of the said *Redebaucke* and followinge the bottom of the hedges one *Buglawton* syde, from thence all along nnto the Southeast eorner of one close of the inheritance of William Rode, gent. called *Woodfeild*, and from thence following the bottom of the hedge in *Congleton* syde to the corner butting upon the said Ryver betweene the said *Woodfeild*, And the close of the inheritance of Hugh Speneer called *Woodfeild* and from thence followinge the bottom of the hedge

[e] Dane-in-Shaw Brook.

on *Buglawton* syde the Ryver to the South East end of a close of the inheritanee of William Leversage, Esquyer, in tenure of Anne Hassell, widow, called by the name of the *Rydeover*, and against the Parke in tenure of Roger Spencer, gent. And then following the bottom of the park hedge adjoining to or neare the said Ryver called *Davenynsale* one *Congleton* syde unto the North East eorner of a banck lyeing neare to the late dwelling house of Thomas Byron, deceased, and now in tenure of the assignes of the said Anne Hassall, and from thenee along the bottom of the hedge of a litle Meadow...and neare to and one the North syde of the horsewaie and bridge weh erosseth over *Davenynsale* leading from *Congleton* towards *Rushton* and *Leek*. ffrom wch meere our towne of *Congleton* hath and doth clayme to follow the bottom of the hedge along Buckleys ground west on *Earleswaie*, And soe to a erosse wch onee stoode and now is decayed or gon in *Earleswaie*. And from thence long the bottom of the hedge of Willm Thorleys grounde leaveing the two parcells of lande and a messuag in tenure of Hugh Barker presented by Richard Bidulphe, Esquyre, to be his lande, to be wthin our meere unto the Ryver of *Davonynsale* South from the said Messuage at the corner of William Thorleys hedge and soe crossing the said Ryver to the bottom of the hedge in the landes of Philip Antrobus adjoining to the yate that leadeth towardes *Bidulph Hall* . turning westward to the North east corner of the hedge of the close called *the waters* of the inheritanee of Randull Rode, of *Walhill*, gent. And then following the bottom of that dich South eastward to the south east corner of the said hedge, And then following the bottom of the hedge of Mr. Biddulphes land untill the hedge came to the landes of Edward Maynaring, of *Whitmore*, Esquyer.

On Tuesday, July 6, 1830, the accession of William IV. was proclaimed by the Deputy Sheriff. The proclamation was read from the Town Hall Colonnade, in the presence of the Mayor and Corporation, after which a procession was formed, headed by the King's Cheshire Yeomanry and two bands of music.

On Thursday, Nov. 8th, 1832, a public Thanksgiving to Almighty God, for the town having escaped the terrible ravages of the Cholera, was solemnized at St. Peter's Church, when the Mayor and Corporation attended.

In July of 1832, a severe shock of earthquake was felt in Congleton and the neighbourhood between two and three o'clock in the morning.

The accession of Queen Victoria was proclaimed in Congleton by C. P. Shakerley, Esq., High Sheriff, on Tuesday, June 27.

1837. At her coronation, the year after, a thousand poor men were supplied with a good substantial dinner on tables laid down each side of High Street.

On Sep. 25, 1839, the foundation stone of what was designed as an immense Viaduct intended to cross the town from the fields on the north-west side of Congleton to Hulme Walfield was laid by the Mayor, Mr. John Fielder Reade. A large concourse of people assembled, including the Corporation, Clergy and gentry of the town and neighbourhood, the Yeomanry, and a Military Band. Baron Rothschild, then a visitor with the lord of the manor, was also present at the ceremony.

Mr. Buck, engineer of the works, affirmed that the undertaking, if carried out, "would be the most gigantic structure which had been attempted in this country. It would be a thousand feet longer than the longest piece of masonry in Europe, which was the *Pont de Saint Esprit* over the Rhone. It would be more than three times the height of that bridge, and would occupy six times its volume."[f] The length was to exceed 3000 feet, supported on 24 arches, each of 60 feet span, to be 100 feet above the level of the river Dane. The whole to contain 630,000 cubic feet of stone, and 26,000,000 bricks: the calculated cost being £100,000.

The scheme was never carried out. The Manchester and Birmingham Railway Company, who were the promoters, were opposed by the strongest competition of rival companies, so that when it was discovered that the average cost, instead of being £25,000 per mile, would exceed £45,000, a sudden suspension of operations ensued. In vain an influential deputation, consisting of Sir Philip Egerton, M.P., Sir Charles Shakerley, Bart., Mr. George Wilbraham, M.P., Mr. E. D. Davenport, Mr. G. C. Antrobus, and Colonel Dixon, waited upon the Directors, urging them to fulfil their engagement: they obtained no redress: and just twelve months after the foundation stone was laid the timber and stone were commenced to be removed; the bricks being purchased at the smallest cost, with which many houses about Astbury-street and Antrobus-street were built.

1841. During the Parliamentary Election for South Cheshire a large mob collected in the vicinity of High-street, and com-

[f] *Macclesfield Courier and Herald* of that date.

CONGLETON VIADUCT.
From a Drawing by MR. C. WILSON.

menced an attack on Mr. Randle Wilbraham, (the present High Steward) Mr. Christopher Moorhouse, Mr. John Wilson, and others. Twelve men of Eaton were hastily sworn special constables, with ten gentlemen of the town. Mr. Samuel Bull received severe injuries in the scuffle. The Riot Act was read by the Mayor, and much disorder prevailed until the Yeomanry, under Captain Antrobus, charged and finally dispersed the crowd.

In 1845 the North Staffordshire Railway Company came into existence, by which Congleton subsequently obtained a communication with Macclesfield, Manchester, and the North. In 1849 the line between here and Macclesfield was opened. It is upwards of 8 miles in length, and runs through some of the prettiest tracts of Cheshire landscapes. Notable are the North Rode and Congleton Viaducts. The former crosses the beautiful valley of the Dane, and consists of 20 semi-circular arches, each of 50 feet span; its height from the bed of the river is 110 feet: its total length being 1275 feet. The Congleton or Daneinshaw Viaduct also spans a beautiful valley. From the river to the level of the rails the structure measures 109 feet, to the top of the parapet 112 feet. The arches, 10 in number, are of 50 feet span each. Like the North Rode Viaduct, it is built of brick, but possesses more elaboration in the finish of its cornice, parapets, and abutments.

Nov. 1852. The funeral of the Duke of Wellington was publicly observed at Congleton. The Mayor, (Mr. Thomas Goode) accompanied by a large assembly of people, including the Yeomanry and Friendly Societies of the town, attended divine service at St. Peter's Church.

Sir Francis Graham Moon, Bart., Lord Mayor of London, visited the town in 1855, and was hospitably entertained at a banquet by the Corporation. The style of the symposium was that of the Congleton municipal celebrations of the olden time. Of this, the following interesting account, by Mr. T. Camm Hughes, of Cambridge, appears in the "Cheshire Sheaf," (No. 1620.) "On the Chairman's table lay the gold and silver Maces of the Borough, and capacious china Corporation Bowls full of Sack, flanked by large old two-handed silver flagons, by which the Sack was gradually drawn off and circulated amongst the

company. On every plate was placed a 'Comut Cake,' and the centres of the tables were covered with delicate cakes and confectionery, among which was pre-eminent the famous 'Congleton Gingerbread,'[5] and a profusion of choice fruit. The brewage of the Sack was entrusted to Joseph Speratti, who boasts that he alone possesses the true receipt."

The secret of brewing this famous Sack is said to have died with Speratti. The Comut Cakes, too, are now obsolete, and their description, quoted by Mr. Hughes from Timb's "Nooks and Corners of English Life," it is thought is sufficiently interesting to produce here. "The Congleton Cakes are of triangular form, with a raisin inserted at each corner. These have been used at the Grammar School breaking-up for three quarters of a century. They have been the orthodox cakes at the quarterly account meetings of the Corporation for more than a century, and hence are called 'Comut Cakes.' It is conjectured that the three raisins represent the Mayor and two Justices, who were the governing body under the Charter of James I. The trio of raisins have also been deemed symbolical of the Trinity."

In 1857 the following Memorial was addressed to the present Lord of the Manor: "We, the Mayor Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Congleton, beg leave to address you on the occasion of the decease of your late respected father, and on your succession to the Lord of the Manor of this Borough, and one of its largest and most influential neighbouring gentry. We sympathise with you in sorrow for the removal by death of the late Sir Charles Shakerley, whose loss, as a gentleman of kind and generous disposition, as a liberal and excellent landlord, and as a large employer and bountiful remunerator of the labouring classes, will long be deplored by the whole neighbourhood. We heartily wish for yourself, in the important sphere to which it has pleased God to call you, that you may, during a long life, enjoy every happiness and blessing which health, wealth, and affection can, under the Divine favour, bestow upon you. It will be our earnest wish to maintain with you those relations of mutual and hearty goodwill which should prevail between a municipal com-

[5] The Congleton Gingerbread is still an existing delicacy, making the town as famous as Banbury is for its Cakes, or Mowbray for its Pies.

munity and a neighbouring gentleman so influential for good, as must always be the head of the house of Somerford."

1855. In order to satisfy the craving of the inhabitants for news from the Crimean War, the public reading of Newspapers to the Operatives was instituted this year. The meetings were held in the Town Hall. They were densely crowded, and the readers were Messrs. John Wilson, Christopher Moorhouse, and Rev. Joseph Oakden.

A fine Sevastopol Gun was presented to the town on June 14, 1859, on which day business was suspended, and most shops closed. The gun was escorted from the station by an immense procession, amongst which, seated on the carriage, were the five Crimean heroes: Sergeant Lockett and Private Holland, of the 97th; George Sanders, of the 76th; Thomas Gregory, of the 57th; and T. Etteridge, of the 38th. The following formed the procession:

Cheshire Yeomanry—advance guard.
Foresters' Children on ponies, bearing banners.
Compstal Bridge Band.
Manchester Unity of Odd Fellows.
Congleton Old Band.
Ancient Order of Foresters, Court Eaton.
Mow Cop Band.
Court British Queen. Court Nelson.
Bollington Band.
St. James' Lodge of Odd Fellows.
St. Peter's Drum and Fife Band.
Congleton Troop of Cheshire Yeomanry.
Yeomanry. GUN. Yeomanry.
Crimean Heroes.
Captain Antrobus. Captain Hill.
Pensioners.
Superintendent of Police and Town Beadle.
The Mayor and Corporation.
Drum and Fife Band.
Cheshire Yeomanry—rear guard.

The Gun was paraded through the principal streets, and eventually deposited on a stone platform at the foot of Moody Street. It was afterwards taken to the Park, of which it is now one of the curiosities.

VOLUNTEERS.

IN the month of August, 1798, an Association of Volunteers, consisting of one Company, was formed at Congleton, under the command of Captain Nathaniel Maxey Pattison. Acting under the suggestion of the then Secretary of State for War, the surrounding districts also joined the movement. In the same year Nantwich had raised two Companies, which in 1803 were increased to six; Macclesfield also possessed two; and a regiment of six Companies named "The Loyal Sandbach and Rode Volunteer Infantry," was formed under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel John Ford, and Majors Randle Wilbraham and Weston Bayley.

The Congleton Association lasted only a few years, and after 1804, when the Knutsford men were on duty here for twenty-one days, little further is known. The Colours, inscribed "Congleton Volunteers, 1804," are still in the possession of the Corporation.

In 1859 a Congleton Corps was formed, and named the "5th Cheshire Rifle Volunteer Corps," consisting of one Company, and containing three officers and ninety-seven non-commissioned officers and men. Amongst these were: Sir Charles Watkin Shakerley, Bart., Captain: F. H. R. Wilbraham, Lieutenant; Arthur Isaac Solly, Ensign: Robert Beales, M.D., Surgeon; Edward H. Solly, George William Reade, and Christopher Moorhouse, Sergeants; George William Hall, Henry Lister Reade, and John Edward Garside, Corporals. Thirty of the principal gentry of the town and district became recruits. In June the number reached sixty-four, with a fund of £300. Each member paid a subscription of ten shillings, and provided himself with a loose tunic, breeches, leggings, and a cap of grey cloth. Black leather accoutrements were adopted, and rifles of the long Enfield pattern. Subsequently this corps became the head quarters of the "Fifth Administrative Battalion Cheshire Rifle Volunteers," with Sir Charles Watkin Shakerley, Lieutenant-Colonel; Captain James Swetenham, Adjutant; F. H. R. Wilbraham, Captain; George William Hall, honorary Quarter-Master; Arthur I. Solly, Lieutenant; Henry Lister Reade, Ensign.

For most of the following Annals I am indebted to Captain

Astley Terry's "Historical Records" of the Battalion, and to local newspapers:

1860. On February 11th, the first Ball was given in the Congleton Town Hall, at which upwards of 200 guests were present. In April of the same year a Sham Fight was held on the moorlands of Congleton Edge. In November a silver Bugle was presented to the Battalion by Randle Wilbraham, of Rode Hall, on behalf of the ladies of Congleton.

1862. The Review and Sham Fight took place in the grounds adjoining Biddulph Grange. The North Staffordshire Corps attended. Among the visitors present were: General Sir George Wetherall, K.C.B., the Earl of Lichfield, Viscount Ingestre, Sir Philip Egerton, M.P., the Right Hon. C. B. Adderley, M.P. The Congleton Company, with those of Hanley, Stone, and Eccleshall, were under the command of Sir Charles W. Shakerley.

1867. General Sir R. Wilbraham, K.C.B., was appointed honorary Colonel. In 1840–1 he served on the Staff as Assistant Adjutant-General in the Syrian Campaign, and was with the advance on Gaza; he was also at Inkerman, and the Siege of Sevastopol. This year Sir Charles W. Shakerley gave a gold medal to be shot for by the officers of the Battalion, which he himself won.

1870. On August 6th, the Battalion, 638 strong, attended the Chester Review. In October the old style rifle was changed for the Snider.

1871. The 5th Corps was increased to two Companies, designated the Congleton and Odd Rode.

1872. The last annual Drill and Sham Fight took place in Somerford Park, in which the 2nd Manchester R.V.C. took part. The Battalion went into Camp at Somerford Park on 24 June, for a week's training, when 712 of all ranks were present at the inspection. Sir Charles W. Shakerley this year instituted a Camp Prize for the best Company.

1873. The Secretary of State for War sanctioned the abolition of tunics, substituting the patrol jacket. Captain Swetenham, who had been Adjutant of the Battalion since its formation, retired from the service. He received the honorary rank of Major.

1874. Captain Astley Terry, of the 60th Rifles, was appointed Adjutant for five years.

1875. John Edward Garside[h] was appointed Quartermaster. Captain Wilbraham retired: he had been an officer in the 5th Corps since its establishment. Lieutenant William Bevern Grix, Ensign in 1867, was promoted to the rank of Captain. The prize given for the best shot amongst the Sergeant Instructors was won by Alfred Jeffs, (5th Fusiliers) the present Instructor.

1876. Other alterations in the uniform were effected. A plate, designed by Captain Terry, was adopted for the pouch belts of the officers, and one similar for the Sergeants. The shako was abandoned and the Glengarry ordered to be worn in full dress by officers and men.

1877. The Rev. J. M. Bannerman, Vicar of St. Stephen's, Congleton, was appointed Chaplain to the Battalion. Sir Charles W. Shakerley became Commandant. This year, out of an enrolled strength of 1270 men of all ranks, 1209 were present at the Camp at Somerford Park.

1878. War between England and the East being imminent, Sir Charles W. Shakerley offered his Battalion for service abroad. On the inspection day, this year, 1328 men were present at Somerford Park. A grey helmet for full dress was adopted by the Battalion.

1879. At the request of the Lieutenant-Colonel, Captain Terry's term of service as Adjutant was extended to 31 March; after which he joined his Regiment then on service in Zululand. Captain Henry P. M. Wylie, 60th Royal Rifles, was appointed Adjutant.

1880. The Twenty-first Anniversary of the formation of the Volunteer Service.

1881. Lieut.-Colonel Sir Charles Watkin Shakerley was nominated by Her Majesty the Queen to be a Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, in recognition of his services in the Cheshire Yeomanry Cavalry, and the Volunteer Force. This year Major E. Coghlan, late Quartermaster Depôt Battalion, was appointed Quartermaster of the 5th Battalion. A detachment of 150 non-commissioned officers and men under the command of the Adjutant, Captain Wylie, attended the Volunteer Review held before the Queen at Windsor.

[h] Died 15 November, 1880.

1882. Captain Wylie was promoted Major 21 Oct. Captain and Hon. Major George William Reade, who had been connected with the Corps since 1859, died this year.

1883. Lieut.-Colonel Sir Charles W. Shakerley, Bart., C.B., was promoted to the rank of Honorary Colonel. The Adjutant's term of service expired. He was presented with a handsome silver cup by his friends in the regiment. He rejoined the 3rd Battalion of his regiment then on service in Egypt.

1884. The annual returns show an increase in the strength of the Battalion, the number enrolled 1001, of whom 996 were efficient. Captain Godfrey Astell, King's Royal Rifles, succeeded Major Wylie as Adjutant.

1861. The Biddulph Valley Railway for mineral traffic was opened this year. The first train of coal arrived from Mr. R. Heath's collieries at the Brook Street Station, Thursday, June 13th.

1862. The following memorial of condolence was presented by the Corporation to Her Majesty on the death of the Prince Consort:

"Gracious and beloved sovereign,—We the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the borough of Congleton, in the county of Chester, beg leave from our inmost hearts to express to your Majesty in this time of your deepest affliction, our sympathy, veneration, and love. We dare not dwell upon the loss with which it has pleased Almighty God to visit your Majesty by a stroke so sudden, and to human thought and feeling so terrible. We can scarcely yet realise the heavy deprivation to all this realm of a character so noble, of a life so pure and beneficent, and of an example so illustrious. The memory of what your Royal Consort was, while it will hereafter be of the greatest comfort to your Majesty's heart, and while it will for generations be a blessing to us and to our children, must serve at present not to enhance your Majesty's affliction and to deepen the universal mourning which overshadows our native land. May the good and gracious God who for purposes of inscrutable love and goodness has thought fit thus to afflict our Queen and our country, continue to afford to your Majesty that heavenly consolation which has already enabled you to present to your devoted people an example of resignation so beautiful, and of a remembrance of your high duties so sublime. May He graciously

preserve your Majesty in health, and your realm even amidst the clouds now surrounding us, in peace and prosperity. May the bright example of him whom we deplore be ever in the remembrance of his children as their best heritage, and, under God, their greatest safeguard, and especially may that now nearest and dearest object of the affections of your Majesty, and hope of this kingdom,—the Prince of Wales, be for many years to come your Majesty's greatest human comfort and support, and ever seek by walking in the footsteps of his Royal Parents, the universal veneration and love which linger round the grave of the one, and which earnestly pray for the yet long, happy, and glorious life and reign of the other.

"Given under our hands and seal this the twentieth day of December, 1862.

"W. HADFIELD, Mayor."

A great flood arose here on the night of the 2nd of January, 1863. The bursting of the Vale Pool embankment occasioned a voluminous rush of water into the centre of the town. Great destruction of property ensued.

1863. On the 10th March, the marriage of the Prince and Princess of Wales was celebrated at Congleton by a general holiday. Congratulatory addresses were forwarded by the Council to the Queen, the Prince and Princess. The procession was the greatest ever known in Congleton, and consisted of—The Yeomanry, Rifle Volunteers and Band, Halberdiers and Borough Constables, Sergeant at Mace, the Mayor, High Steward, County and Borough Justices, Aldermen and Councillors, Gentry and Inhabitants, Brass Band of St. James' School, the Grammar School Boys, the National Day and Sunday Schools, Mow Cop Brass Band, the Congleton Old Band, Odd Fellows, Foresters, Society of Coachmakers, Volunteer Fire Brigade with Engine, Drum and Fife Band, Congleton Fire Brigade with Engine, and a body of Pensioners.

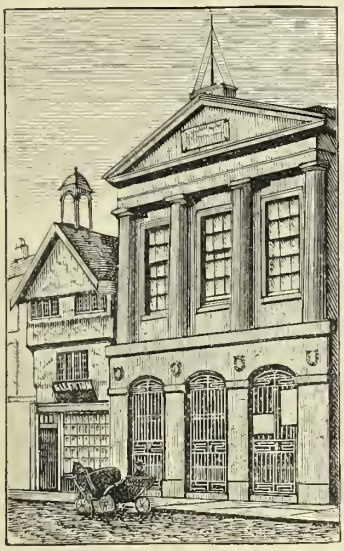
1864. The Biddulph Line of Railway opened this year.

THE TOWN HALL.

THE first recorded building occupied the same site as the present Town Hall, and is shewn in the illustration, opposite page 10. This was removed in 1804, and a new one

The Present Town Hall.
Erected 1864.

erected at a cost of £700. Mr. James Brown, of Congleton, was the builder. It contained a large room where the municipal business was transacted, a room for the imprisonment of debtors, a jury-room, and dungeons for the temporary incarceration of criminals.



Old Town Hall.
Pulled down 1864.

In 1823, through the munificence of Sir Edmund Antrobus, a spacious Assembly Room and Market Hall were added. In 1864, when the present Hall was erected, every effort was made to save these portions of Sir Edmund Antrobus's bounty, and to combine them with the modern building. This, however, was found impossible, and an entirely new Hall was erected.

This is a handsome structure of stone, with its façade fronting High Street. A Covered Market on the ground floor is entered under a succession of lofty arches leading right and left, which add considerably to the majestic appearance of the building. A row of eight windows extends along the façade, which is also ornamented with three sculptured figures in Bath stone, representing Queen Victoria, holding a sceptre, and canopied, with Henry de Lacy on the right, and King Edward I. on the left. Beneath, is a row of 31 shields left blank for the introduction of the heraldic bearings of the various county and principal families. Over the central windows, rising 110 feet, is the belfry tower and clock chamber, parapeted and holding three bells, one for striking the hour, the other two, of lesser calibre, for chiming the quarters.

The first entrance is in the back wall of the tower, and opens into a wide corridor from which, on the right, a spacious stone staircase, consisting of two domical compartments supported on massive arches, leads to the several municipal chambers: including the Mayor's State Apartments, and Council Chamber.

The Assembly Room is at the extreme end of the corridor,

and measures 75 feet long and 49 feet wide, and will accommodate over 1,000 people. Facing the entrance is a large semicircular window, the sides being lighted by a succession of circular windows, filled in with square panelling. A capacious gallery occupies three sides of the room, and beneath the large window, directly over the platform, is an orchestral gallery, consisting of nine trefoliated arches, supported on shafts and flanked by figures emblematic of Music, worked in Bath stone. Though a pleasing ornament, the gallery itself is comparatively useless, being so constructed as to render it entirely unfit for use. The roof is of the hammer-beam kind, from it are suspended polished brass chandeliers.

The erection of the whole building, which cost £8000, is from the designs of Mr. E. W. Godwin; Mr. Burkitt, of Wolverhampton, being the contractor. It was opened to the public 11 July, 1866.

1866. The Cattle Plague, from which Cheshire suffered far more than any county, made its first appearance at Loachbrook Farm, occupied by Mr. Wm. Hill, April 1st of this year: out of a stock of 34 cattle on Easter Sunday, on the 24th of the same month the last cow was buried. Joseph Hill, of Lower Medhurst Green Farm, lost 68. Thomas Hill, of the Lakes Farm, lost 34. John Venables, of Bradshaw Brook Farm, Allostock, lost 43. William Carter, Millgate Farm, Allostock, lost 19.

A Stamping out, or Compensation Act was passed and came into operation 20th Feb., 1866, by which all cattle taken by the Plague were at once killed and one-half of their value paid to the owner, from a Rate of £300,000, levied through the county, and spread over a term of 30 years.

In 1866 the Cottage Hospital was established by voluntary contributions, and has been so supported up to the present time. Since its formation over seven hundred patients have been treated with professional care; the medical men of the town gratuitously giving their services. By permission of the clergy and ministers in the town and neighbourhood collections are made annually in the several places of worship towards its support. The manufacturers have also made collections amongst their hands with very satisfactory results. In 1876, a legacy of

£50 was bequeathed by James Thorley, towards the Hospital Fund; and another in 1879, of £200, by Mrs. Barber, of Evesham. In 1880 a Bazaar, organised by Mrs. Antrobus, of Eaton Hall, and other ladies, realised the large sum of £754. John Hinckley, late of Congleton, by his will in 1882, left £50 towards its support; and in 1885 Mrs. Mary Mayer, of Derby, bequeathed a legacy of £20 to the same.

Miss Hillman, of King's College Hospital, was the first professional nurse engaged as matron, which post she held up to her death in 1876. Miss Wigg, from the Liverpool Union, was her successor. She resigned in 1885, for the more important duties at the Fever Hospital, Leicester: when Miss Wagnell, from the Royal Free Hospital, was appointed, and is the present matron.

Mr. J. J. Foden undertook the honorary duties of Secretary from 1866 to 1882, when Major Coghlan (then resident in Congleton) accepted the post. He left the town in 1884, when Mr. John H. Kennerley, the present honorary Secretary, was appointed.

J. Coutts Antrobus, Esq., of Eaton Hall, has been Chairman since its foundation.

Congleton Cottage Hospital.

1865. This year the Gas Works were purchased by the Corporation, and now form a valuable addition to the borough income.

1869. On Monday, July 19th, the Prince and Princess of Wales passed through Congleton Station *en route* to Worsley Hall, near Manchester, the seat of the Earl of Ellesmere. The Mayor, (Dr. Robert Beales) attended by the Corporation, Clergy, Magistrates, and gentry of the town and neighbourhood, walked in procession to the Station, when the following Address was presented by the Mayor:

"To their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, Earl and Countess of Chester.

"May it please your Royal Highnesses,—We, the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the ancient and loyal Borough of Congleton, beg leave most respectfully and cordially to welcome the entrance of your Royal Highnesses into your County of Chester. In common with all the subjects of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen, we delight to evince our loyalty and affectionate reverence towards herself and the Throne, in paying respect to members of her august family so near and dear to Her Majesty, and in whom centre the special hopes of the British Empire. We gratefully acknowledge the interest taken by your Royal Highnesses in all that promotes the welfare and prosperity of the Nation: thus following the benignant example of Her Majesty and her illustrious and lamented Consort. We hope that the present journey of your Royal Highnesses will be fortunate and prosperous, and that for very many years to come your Royal Highnesses will be favoured with every personal and domestic blessing, and will have occasion with all Her Majesty's subjects to rejoice in the continually increasing welfare of the Empire.

"Given under our common seal this nineteenth day of July, 1869.

"Robert Beales, Mayor."

1870. This year a School Board, provided under the Elementary Education Act, was established. The following members were elected to constitute the first Board: George William Reade, Chairman: Robert Beales, M.D., Vice-Chairman; James Broad, Charles Goode, Rev. Frank Hopwood, M.A., George Pickford, Joshua Ward.

THE PUBLIC PARK.

THE PUBLIC PARK and RECREATION GROUNDS, picturesquely situated on the hill side north of the Dane, were opened to the public on May 29th, 1871. The grounds cover an area of some 12 acres, with a bowling green 65 yards long and 45 yards wide. Forming a pleasing background and pleasant sylvan retreat is the Town Wood,[f] of 11 acres extent.

Over three acres of land were given by the lord of the manor, subject to a nominal rent of 5s., and a lease of 999 years; a stipulation being made that the same should be forfeited if at any time the Corporation should expend more than £100 from the rates of the town towards its maintenance.

A new road to the Park was made leading through Market Street and accessible from Kinsey Street, where the river is crossed by a substantial bridge.

The plan of the grounds was from designs by Mr. Kemp, of Birkenhead, and Mr. William Blackshaw, at that time Surveyor of Congleton.[i]

1874. On April 5th a beautiful granite tomb, in St. Peter's Cemetery, erected by the parishioners and friends to the memory of the Rev. John Hughes, late vicar of the parish, was uncovered by the Rev. Richard Garland, LL.B., amongst a large concourse of people.

1881. On October 27th, the opening of the Water Works was formally inaugurated. The first outcome of several years' consultation was a design to erect a reservoir at Timbersbrook, the cost of which was estimated at £40,000. These plans were discarded, and the Borough Surveyor, Mr. William Blackshaw, after testing the numerous springs existing among the confines of the Forge Wood, discovered that from this source the whole Borough might be supplied. A water tower, 200 feet above the river bed, was erected, with a tank on its summit capable of holding 300 tons of water, carried up by powerful engine pumps.

To ensure a constant supply and to serve the higher districts of Mossley, High Town, and the Station, a copious supply of excellent water coming from Corda Well, situated near the

[f] The Wood mentioned in the Domesday Record.

[i] Now the Borough Surveyor of Stafford.

ridge of the Mow Cop hills, was secured, and is collected in a large tank there constructed.

The scheme, which cost under £15,000, has proved in every way highly successful. The late Sir Philip Egerton, on whose property Corda Well is situated, liberally granted the water and way leave through nearly three miles of his land. Sir Charles W. Shakerley, the lord of the manor, gave the use of the Forge Wood water and the land adjoining, at a moderate perpetual ground rental. By analysation, both the waters of Corda Well and the Forge are pronounced highly healthful and pure; the former, owing to the natural filter of millstone grit through which it passes, is of a slightly softer nature than the latter, which issues from the new red sandstone, near the Dane.

The whole of the works were from plans of Mr. William Blackshaw, the Surveyor. Mr. Thomas Kirke was the Contractor.

1885. General Election Macclesfield Division. The candidates for this Division of Cheshire were Mr. William Cunliffe Brooks, of Barlow Hall, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, the representative of the Conservative party, and Mr. William Coare Brocklehurst, of Butley Hall, Macclesfield, the representative of the Liberals. The contest was fought on Wednesday, December 2nd, and resulted in a victory for Mr. Brocklehurst with a majority of 465, he having polled 3311 votes, and his opponent, 2846. Macclesfield, which, as a borough, was disfranchised in 1881 for corrupt practices at the last general election, formed a portion of Mr. Brooks' old county constituency, he having represented East Cheshire along with Colonel Legh (the candidate for Hyde) for the last sixteen years. The original proposition was to make Congleton the chief centre of the new Division, but owing to various reasons, notably the injustice to the old borough of Macclesfield, (though Congleton can vie with it in antiquity) the former place received the designation of the Division.

View in the Public Park.

Trades.

THERE is something more than mere interest in studying the trades and occupations of our very earliest forefathers. Roman, Saxon, and Norman, each on their arrival in this country produced new epochs in its annals, enervating the spirit of the people by the importation of their own ideas, their own necessities. And so with the progress of time and changes of custom, men's hands have been turned to numberless industrial occupations, luxurious or matter-of-fact, as the characteristics of a locality required.

Congleton history bears on its records a changing existence of trade and industry. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries important manufacturers of leather, including skinners, tanners, and glovers, found ample occupation for the inhabitants. Felt-making and linen and woollen weaving were also of much consequence. The manufacture of Laces, or as they were called "Points," subsequently introduced, became the staple trade of the town. Blome, writing his *Britannia* in 1673, described Congleton as being a "large and noted town, its inhabitants make great store of Leather Gloves, Purses, and Points," (page 57.) Yates, who also speaks of the latter as "celebrated Congleton Points," has the following description:[a] "They were made of tough white leather, cut into small thongs,

[a] "History of Congleton," page 91.

and pointed at the ends with tags made of tin or silver, similar to those now used for women's laces. Congleton Points were generally worn for ages, by men and women. All the men's garments were tied with them, and they were also used by the women instead of the bodkins and skewers formerly worn. The Points continued fashionable and in great demand till the invention of buckles and buttons, the latter of which, particularly those manufactured with so much beauty at Birmingham, completely superseded them."

The Silk Trade.

A NEW era began in Congleton with the introduction of this important industry. The establishment of the Silk Trade here is due to Mr. John Clayton, of Stockport, who, in 1752, erected a large mill similar to the first, and at that time the only one in England: namely, what is now known as "Bridgett's Old Mill," which stands by the Derwent, at Derby.

The development in England of the manufacture of silk and of silk throwing as a useful industry and an art manufacture dates principally from the time of Louis XIV. and his Revocation of the famous Edict of Nantes. In the year 1685 thousands of French refugees sought protection in England. Amongst these were many of the cleverest silk workers of the south of France, who settled chiefly at Spitalfields, in London, and at Norwich. The subsequent invention of steam and power looms decided the Spitalfield manufacturers to open up a wider field for operations, and many transferred their works to Lancashire and Cheshire, and eventually to Coventry. With the last decade of the same century the trade had made considerable progress, and the completion of the first Throwing Mill at Derby (already referred to) in the year 1715, may be regarded as its recognised establishment. The following descriptive narrative of this celebrated Mill is abbreviated from Mr. Yates' History, who quotes as his authority Mr. Hutton, a Derbyshire historian: Built beside the Derwent in 1715, it is supposed to be an exact model of the original mill then existing in the dominion of the King of Sardinia. Its founder, Sir John Lombe, a London merchant,

travelled into Italy *incognito* for the purpose of obtaining the secrets attending the working of silk, particularly silk throwing. His undertaking was one of great peril, the Italians exercising extreme caution to prevent the piracy of their trade. By shrewd perseverance he succeeded in gaining those ideas and plans which eventually consummated what proved to be his fatal success. Being discovered, he made good his escape to England, accompanied by two Italians, who were sworn accomplices. On arriving he chose the town of Derby for the erection of his Mill, and, in 1718, obtaining a Patent, secured to himself enormous profits for fourteen years. But the Italians, upon whom the treachery had been played, vowed the destruction of the man whose ingenuity had thus turned the current of their business into another channel. An artful woman was sent from Italy in the character of a friend; she associated with the parties, and was permitted to assist in the preparation of the silk. Her influence was privately exerted on the natives who had fled with Lombe from Italy, and, succeeding with one, she prepared to execute the long meditated plan of death. The victim lingered in agony two or three years, when the springs of life being completely exhausted, he breathed his last. Slow poison is supposed to have been the means employed to deprive him of existence; and though suspicion was almost strengthened into certainty by the circumstances that transpired at the trial, the evidence was not decisive, and the woman was discharged.

The Old Mill, at Congleton, is the one erected by John Clayton in 1752. It stands on a site of ground between the Corn Mill and the bridge originally leased by the Corporation at a small annual rental of one shilling, with a grant to Clayton and his heirs, rent free for 300 years, of sufficient water from the Corn Mill pool as would pass through a 10-inch culvert. The building is a capacious one of brick, and its original length 240 feet.[b] The water-wheel, which formerly worked the whole plant of machinery, and which measures 19ft. 6in. in diameter and 5ft. 6in. broad, was the ingenious construction of James Brindley, the famous Newchapel engineer.

In 1754 Mr. Nathaniel Maxey Pattison, of London, who had obtained his experience under Mr. Richard Wilson, the then proprietor of the Derby Mill, was received into partnership by

[b] A two-storey building, 25 feet long, has been added during the last few years.

Mr. Clayton, and jointly the works were continued. Ultimately, the two brothers, Nathaniel and Samuel Pattison, and James Clayton carried on the business. A lease of the adjacent Corn Mill was taken at an annual rent of £150 during the three lives, which in 1797 was surrendered and a new one entered into at the rent of £187 4s. 0d.,[c] and the old accustomed forty-eight loads of malt, thirty shillings in lieu of "malt dust," and eighteen measures of barley flour for the poor at Christmas.

With the beginning of the present century Schappe or Spun Silk Spinning was introduced here. The Old Mill about this time employed from four to five hundred hands. Other mills were built, and the population increased from 3861 in 1801 to 6405 in 1821, while a further increase of nearly 3000 took place during the next three years. And now, like Macclesfield and Leek, the town became the centre of a large silk trade, the goods made being chiefly broad silks, handkerchiefs, velvets, and ribbons.

Ribbon weaving was commenced about the year 1755, and for forty or fifty years a substantial trade was done with the Coventry buyers.

A large cotton spinning mill was erected by Richard Martin in 1785. This trade was further developed by Messrs. George and William Reade, Jesse Drakeford, and John Vaudrey. It has now become quite extinct in Congleton. The following is a list of silk throwsters and ribbon manufacturers, as printed by Yates in 1820:[d]

Charles Barlow, Daneinshaw
Elizabeth Barlow, Bridge-street
George Barlow, West-street
Paul Barlow, West-street
Samuel Boyse, Lawton-street
Allen Booth, Bridge-street
James Broadhurst, Daneinshaw
John Broadhurst, Dane Mill
John Cotton, Lawton-street
John Daniel, Cowhill-bank
John Duncalf, Mill-street
Richard Edwards, Booth-street
James Foden, West-street
W. Forster & Son, Wagg-street
Gent & Norbury, Moody-street
Peter Gent, Chapel-street
Charles Hackney, Lawton-street
Hall & Johnson, Daneinshaw
John Hall, Dane-street
Richard Hall, Mill-street

[c] This satisfactory source of income to the town continued from year to year until 1884, when Mr. Samuel Pearson, the present proprietor of the Old Mill, declined to renew the lease; and the Corn Mill now remains idle.

[d] "History of Congleton," page 99.

The Old Mill.

Thomas Harthern, Bridge-street
Henry Hogg, Daneinshaw
James Hulme, Booth-street
John Jackson, Moody-street
Jefferis & Cockson, Havannah Mills
John Johnson, Daneinshaw
James Johnson, Bridge-street
W. & T. Johnson, Throstle's Nest
Charles Lockett, Mill-street
N. M. & J. & J. Pattison, Old Mill
Pedley & Thornicroft, Mill-street
Charles Roe & Co., Dane Mill
George Roe, Bridge-street

A steady progress in the trade continued until the years 1824–6, when, owing to several causes, chiefly a change in fashion and the free trade in silk, it began to decline. The proprietors of the Old Mill removed to London, and this mill and most of the others in the town were closed from 1826 to 1830. Terrible distress prevailed, for the population had reached over 9300, a great portion of which was engaged in the industry. In January, 1829, a public meeting was held in the Town Hall, "to take into consideration the very depressed state of the town, and to petition the two Houses of Parliament on the subject." A relief committee was organised, which in March of the same year provided over 1200 people with loaves and soup, and in the following month over 6000 had been relieved. Thirty mills had stopped work, and in this month a body of operatives walked the streets; men, women, and children carrying large black banners, inscribed "Work and Starve," "Down with Free Trade"; and Shuttles draped in black, suspended from poles. It is recorded by a local paper* that "more than 7000 persons were there, and it was truly depressing to witness the deep sense of calamity visible on every countenance." This finally gave place to tumult and rowdyism, and in May a body of weavers proceeded to Buglawton, carrying with them an effigy of an unpopular manufacturer, which they burnt amid much disturbance.

With the close of 1830 a revival took place. Mr. Samuel Pearson, father of the present owner, purchased the Old Mill, and with his own hands, I'm told, rang the mill-bell in the early morning of the day it was re-opened. Now began a season of good trade, checked for a time by a disastrous outbreak among Unionists and Non-unionists, which in 1834 assumed so formidable a form that military aid was asked for, and a company of

* *Macclesfield Courier and Herald.*

the 34th Regiment of Foot, and a troop of the 4th Dragoon Guards were stationed here for several days.

The following is a description of a Trades Unionist's funeral which took place from Bnglawton about this time: "The coffin was followed by fifty or sixty yonng women dressed in white, and a similar number of matrons dressed in black, with white hoods, immediately behind: then came a person snrpliced, and carrying a large Bible, lying open at the one hundred and thirty-third Psalm. These were followed by a proeession of six or seven hundred persons, Unionists, walking four abreast, with hands joined, and wearing black and white rosettes."

Reviewing the state of trade in 1839 and 1840, when the Chartist movement was beginning to influence the whole working commmnity of England, it is noticeable that in Congleton the cry for the "People's Charter" and the Repeal of the Corn Laws was making itself heard, to be only too willingly taken up by the meagrely paid operatives. Chartist lecturers applied for the Town Hall in which to address the people, which the authorities refused: but, finally, Congleton, Macclesfield and Leek, were besieged by these delegates harangning at street corners, calling on the people not to work until the Charter was obtained. The result, as may be conceived, was bad. Trade beeame depressed, many inhabitants left the place, and three hundred houses stood tenantless and eighteen mills idle. Masters and servants suffered alike. Machinery was sold by the poorer mannfactnrers at less than a third of the original cost.

The serions riots of 1842 were brought abont, as many great events of history, by the nnexpected and nnobserved influence of certain individual characters. Chartist leaders were agitating the whole of Lancashire, Cheshire, Staffordshire, and Yorkshire. Distress reigned in every quarter. The entire country was suffering. On Saturday, Angnst 12, a crowd of some thonsands of Chartist rioters came into Congleton from the Macclesfield road. They came down Rood Hill brandishing lnge blndgeons, and calling upon others to join them, which they did with all readiness. Their first visit was to the Old Mill, and afterwards they besieged the factories of Messrs. Thompson, Bull, and Reade. At each place labonr was arrested, the rioters receiving no opposition. Engines were stopped, plugs driven ont of boilers, fires extingnished, men, women, and children turned

out; the decree having gone forth that labour was to cease until the Charter had become the law of the land. In one great agitated throng they passed through the town to Buglawton, returning at nightfall, when speeches were made in several quarters of the town. Next to the silk masters came the bakers and confectioners for their share of abuse. From these all edibles were sequestrated, and they themselves conveniently proscribed enemies of the people. For two days and nights the mob had possession of the town. At night they slept either in the open streets or under hedges and in barns on the high roads. The Queen's Proclamation, offering a reward of £50 for the apprehension of persons preventing work of any kind, was posted on the Town Hall gate. This, and the armed presence of the Knutsford and Congleton Yeomanry, prevented any further serious outbreaks, and caused the hungry intruders eventually to disperse.[f]

But this had all proved very disastrous to the silk trade. In 1845 a petition, signed by over 400 weavers, was presented in the House of Commons, praying that a Board of Trade might be established in the district, composed of masters and workmen who should be authorised to regulate the proportionate number of apprentices, to decide upon any abatement demanded for indifferent work, and to superintend generally the operations of the trade.[g]

The depression in 1847 preceded the most prosperous time of the silk trade in Congleton. Of the Spitalfield weavers, it is said that over 1100 had been received into the workhouse, and 1700 were having outdoor relief. The recognised cause of stagnation was attributed to the legislative measures in favour of Free Trade, Sir Robert Peel's tariff, and the utter impossibility on the part of the English manufacturers to compete successfully with the lightly taxed manufactures of the Continent. And again, it was traceable through the adoption of excessive prices dictated in consequence of the alarm of a probable deficient supply, which raised the price of silk manufactured goods to an amount which led to a serious falling off in the demand and compelled the manufacturers at length to cease work almost entirely.

[f] This event is spoken of by the older townspeople as the great "Mob Wakes" of 1842.

[g] This appears to have received but little if any attention.

Between the years 1851 and 1861 the population increased from 10,517 to 12,338. The number of operatives engaged in the silk industry in 1861 was 5186; in 1883, 1275; in 1884, 1530. Forty throwing mills were working full time, and the manufacturers engaged in the keenest competition with Middleton, Leigh, Blackley, and Manchester, as well as continental towns. With this year came the adoption of the French Treaty, for which the silk trade in England was wholly sacrificed. It is needless here to enumerate the crushing effect its adoption produced in the greatest silk centres of England, but the extracts appended at the close of this chapter from Mr. Wardle's "Report to the Royal Commissioners on Technical Instructions,"[h] will illustrate for themselves.

SILK MILLS WORKING IN CONGLETON,[i]

1840—60.

Year.			No. of hands.
1840	Mr. Daniel Morris	Green Island	100
—	Messrs. Reade & Co.	Brook Mills	250
—	Messrs. S. Pearson & Son	Old Mill	600
—	Mr. Bull	Bridge Factory	120
—	Mr. Johnson	Buglawton	300
—	Mr. Thomas Johnson	Buglawton	180
—	Mr. Hogg	Buglawton	250
—	Mr. C. W. Barlow	Bath Vale	160
—	Mr. Cotton	Lawton Street	200
—	Mr. Davenport	Park Mill	110
—	Mr. Gent	Vale Mill	200
—	Mr. Richard Hall	Marlfields	400
—	Mr. George Barlow	Silk Street	160
—	Mr. Taylor	Prospect Mill	150
—	Mr. Wolridge	Dane Street[j]	200
1844	Mr. Charles W. Barlow	Bridge Factory	160
—	Mr. J. Clarke	Eaton Bridge	320
—	Mr. Simon Krinks	Washford Mill[k]	70
—	Mr. William Bloor	Moor Street	300
1850	Mr. Noah Vernon	Dane Side	150
—	Mr. Diggory	Flint Mill	60
—	Mr. Walworth	Walworth's Bank	200
—	Mr. T. Barrow	Canal Street	200

[h] Published in 1885.

[i] Kindly supplied to me by Mr. John Hardy and Mr. Henry Bloor.

[j] Afterwards occupied by Messrs. R. Worrall and D. & J. Bradwell.

[k] Now occupied by Mr. H. Barton.

Year.			No. of hands.
1850	Mr. P. Hunt - - -	Swan Bank[l] - -	200
—	Mr. Paul T. Barlow - -	West Street - -	120
—	Mr. Crawford - - -	The Square - -	100
—	Mr. Barton - - - -	The Bridge - -	20
—	Mr. Ginders - - -	Daneinshaw - -	200
—	Mr. Hunt - - - -	Victoria Street -	70
1854	Messrs. Kennerley - -	Thomas Street -	120
1855	Mr. George Bloor - -	New Mill - -	100
—	Mr. Chatwin - - -	Canal Street - -	130
1858	Mr. George Barlow - -	Green Island - -	100
1859	Messrs. D. & J. Bradwell -	Dane Street - -	100
1860	Mr. B. Robinson - -	Buglawton[m] - -	110
—	Mr. Rowley - - -	Green Island - -	70
—	Mr. Sproston - - -	Wagg Street - -	30
—	Messrs. C. Pedley & Sons -	The Meadows - -	120
—	Mr. Garside - - -	Little Lane - -	50
—	Mr. Barlow - - -	The Square - -	120

Strikes began in Congleton in 1863, which drove much trade to the Middleton districts. In 1872 between two and three thousand hands struck work because of a reduction in wages of one shilling per week. From 1860–8 wages paid to young women on the average were 6s. 6d. per week; in the three following years these were raised to 7s. 6d. and 8s. Since then fluctuating scales have been adopted, averaging from 6s. to 10s. per week. Now winders receive 8s. per week, and weavers from 15s. to 20s.

SILK THROWSTERS AND MANUFACTURERS IN CONGLETON,
1886.

THROWSTERS.

		No. of hands.
S. Pearson & Son - - -	Old Mill - - -	564
H. Hogg & Son - - - -	Buglawton - -	200
Paul Barlow - - - -	Silk Street - -	120
Chas. Bull - - - - -	West Fields Mill -	160
Prospect Mill Co. Limited - -	Prospect Mill - -	150
Geo. Chatwin - - - -	Canal Street - -	
Henry Barton - - - -	Buglawton - -	39

[l] Rebuilt, and formed into the present Conservative Club.
[m] Now Messrs. Carson and Bradbury's Paper Mills.

		No. of hands.
C. Barlow & Son	Royle Street	62
Thos. Worrall	Dane Street	52
Chas. Sproston	Wagg Street	30
Geo. Dutton	Thomas Street	15
Wm. Tagell	Daneinshaw	158

THROWSTERS AND MANUFACTURERS.

Brown & Kennerley	Thomas Street	100
J. A. Hall & Co.	Wallworth's Bank	70
W. Woolnough	Lower Park Street	5
B. Elmy & Co. (Crape)	Buglawton	

MANUFACTURERS.

J. & W. Robinson (Broad Silk)	Howey Hill	30
Berisford Bros.	Victoria Mill	110
Thos. Barton	Albert Mill	10

SILK SPINNERS.

P. Wild & Co.	Forge Mills	70
Reade & Co.	Brook Mills	156
Conder & Co.	Bath Vale	130

At the present time the trade doubtless continues to decline. Only twelve throwing mills, with about three-fourths of their machinery, are employed. There are about 170 power-looms manufacturing trimmings, sarcenets, and smallwares. Three firms are employed in the spinning of *bourre*, which is really the manufacture of schaffe, or spun silk: and one in broad silk weaving.

The causes of the decline and what obviously render the depression permanent, are attributed to the withdrawal of protection; the falling off in the throwing branch resulting from the importation of thrown silks, duty free, from the continent. Issuing from one whose authority on the subject has been sought after by the highest people connected with the trade, the following note, bearing on the French Treaty of 1860, may possibly elucidate to some extent the question to which it belongs:[n]

"There is now no practical good to be obtained by any discussion as to the wisdom or short-sightedness of the French Treaty of 1860; the mischief having been done and the untold misery endured. It

[n] Mr. Thomas Wardle, F.C.S., F.G.S., "Report on the Silk Trade."

would, I think, have been wiser at the time to have considered this question on its own merits, apart from other questions relating to the French treaty, and perhaps to have removed the duty gradually. But, however that may be, one thing is certain, that, as soon as the French had the opportunity of sending in their goods, duty free, the scales fell from the eyes of the English manufacturer, who saw that he was undoubtedly beaten on his merits all over the field. The young manufacturer, whose father had made his fortune in the better times of protection, who probably thought there was no necessity for renewed exertion on his part, found himself unequal to, and consequently beaten in, the match with his more skilful and more thoroughly grounded continental *confrère*. This also was the case with the dyer, whose occupation speedily went with the fall of the manufacturing industry.

Another thing is equally clear, that to have continued the duty upon silks would have only tended to prolong or perpetuate the ignorance of the English manufacturer. Nothing now remains but to attain to the excellence, in all minutiæ, which characterises the work of our foreign rivals, never so perfect in all its details as now.

If the English people will give encouragement to the wearing of English silks, whether they choose to buy the cheaper weighted goods or the more expensive pure ones, and also if by some means, such as I have suggested, or any better ones, they can be assured of the exact composition of the article they are buying, there is a sure and certain hope, with the aid of our art schools and a well applied technical education, of the resuscitation and recovery of the manufacturing of English silks at any rate for the English people."

Other reasonable causes have been denounced as detrimental to its success, and Commissions organised to consider the most specific mode of dealing with them. The silk business is essentially more an art than a trade, requiring a much higher class of intellect than in these days it receives.

Results of the French Treaty of 1860 with regard to the following chief centres, reprinted from the above Report:

Congleton: Ribbon trade left the Town. Throwing trade gradually declined, particularly in Italian silks. About twelve mills only now employed.

Coventry: Ruin to the trade.

Derby: Silk throwing much reduced in consequence of general decline in Ribbon trade.

Leek: Injury to the Serge trade.

Macclesfield: Gradual reduction of Macclesfield production.

Manchester: Silk trade practically died out.

Middleton: Simply ruined the trade.

Fustian and Velvet Cutting.

IN 1867, when the Silk trade had sunk to such a depressed state, the introduction in Congleton of Fustian and Velvet Cutting was welcomed by the hundreds of unemployed operatives. Its establishment and growth were rapid. The common idea which existed that the probability of a prosperous return of the silk industry was entirely hopeless had already caused the migration of numerous people of the working-class, for, referring to the census of 1861 and 1867, I find the population within that period had decreased exactly one thousand.

Messrs. Thomas and John Shepherd, of Royton, Lancashire, brought the Fustian trade to Congleton, commencing the work in a small mill situated on Eaton's Bank. Good wages were paid, and not only the unemployed obtained work but many of the silk hands forsook their gentler occupation for this novel and at that time more lucrative trade. Other proprietors came into existence, among whom were Messrs. Thomas Taylor, Walter and Herbert Meanock, and Thomas Mitchell. Trade became good throughout the town, because the enormous influxes to which the industry itself is so famous had not yet touched the Congleton trade. Subsequently, the rumour that the masters were amassing huge fortunes got disseminated among the hands, with this result: among the cutters arose the ambition to become masters too. The capital to realise this being insignificant, many men became master-cutters. Their existence was but short-lived, yet while it lasted, unoccupied mills, empty houses and garrets were fitted with frames, and men, women, and children found full employment. Idle silk mills, to make room for fustian frames, were ruthlessly stripped of valuable machinery, while several commodious factories were reared about the "Meadow" portion of the town. The largest establishment at the present time is the newly-erected branch of Messrs. Collinge & Co., of Oldham.

Mr. Robert Shepherd,[a] of the Meadow Mills, brother of the introducers, very considerately escorted me through his works,

[a] This gentleman also informed me that his brothers were led to Congleton by observing a paragraph in a Lancashire newspaper remarking on Congleton as "a town without a trade."

the details of which he personally described. The rolls of material, either cotton or silk, usually measuring 100 yards, are manufactured in the Lancashire districts. These are tightly stretched on narrow frames of different lengths. The cutter's knife consists of a piece of delicate flexible steel, slotted into the guide which holds the point in its proper groove. This is taken by the cutter down the whole length of the frame running along the material, over which it produces a soft rich pile. After cutting, the material is taken to another department, where the interesting process of stiffening and drying is proceeded with, and the pieces made up ready for the dyer.

By many old townspeople the Fustian cutting has always been shunned. They have not liked the complete submission so generally evinced to the decline of the staple trade, and less have they entertained the introduction of such a substitute for the clean, artistic, and healthy Silk industry. One would imagine, too, that the ceaseless bodily exertions exercised in the operation of Fustian cutting must be somewhat prejudicial to health, particularly with females.

At the present time many of the same features which characterise the causes of the Silk decline are identified with the depression in the Fustian trade, notably the continued changes in fashion.

Congleton Tokens.

IN Boyne's collection of Tokens of the seventeenth century, the following are described :[a]

Obr. RICHARD . COTTON.[b] Arms of the Cotton family: *a chevron between three cotton-hanks, a crescent for difference.*
Rev. OF . CONGLETON . 1667, his half peny. (Plate 6, No. 11.)
Obr. RICHARD . EATON. The Grocers' Arms.
Rev. IN . CONGLETON . 1666. HIS HALF PENY. (Plate 9, No. 10.)
Obr. THOMAS . WELCH.[c] The Feltmakers' Arms.
Rev. IN . CONLETON. T . A . W. (Plate 7, No. 10.)
Obr. JOHN . GLOVER . 1667 [in three lines].
Rev. IN . CONGLETON. HIS . HALF . PENY

About the close of the last century a fine series of copper Tokens, chiefly half pence, were issued by Mr. Charles Roe, of Macclesfield, and were circulated in the adjacent towns. On the edge was marked "Payable at Macclesfield, Liverpool, or Congleton."

[a] Kindly copied for me by Mr. T. Rought Jones, of Market Drayton, Salop.

[b] Mr. Cotton was a Justice of the Peace for Congleton in 1669, and Mayor of the borough in 1671. He was probably a grandson of Edward Cotton, Esq., of Cotton, co. Chester.

[c] Welch's Will was administered at the Chester Wills Court in June, 1796.

Astbury Church.

Ecclesiastical History.

CONGLETON, which is a Rural Deanery in the Archdeaconry and Diocese of Chester, is now divided into four parishes, namely, St. Peter's, St. James's, St. Stephen's, and Holy Trinity, Mossley; and was formerly included in the once extensive parish of Astbury. The ancient parish contained the following townships:

Newbold Astbury.	Smallwood.
Congleton.	Somerford-cum-Radnor.
Buglawton.	Davenport.
Moreton-cum-Alcumlow.	Eaton.
Odd Rode.	Hulme Walfield.

Somerford Booths.

The original parish, before the Reformation, embraced the parish of Brereton, and most probably those of Lawton and Swettenham.[a] The aggregate tithes of the above-named eleven townships made the benefice of Astbury a very valuable one.[b] As described further on, Congleton, while entirely subordinate ecclesiastically to Astbury, yet possessed one, formerly two, churches or chapels; quite recently the above-named four parishes were apportioned out of the Borough and regularly constituted. Buglawton, Odd Rode, Smallwood, Eaton, and Hulme Walfield townships have also of late years become separate parishes, each possessing a commodious Church, and

[a] Ormerod's "*Cheshire*," Helsby's edition, vol. iii., page 21.

[b] About £3000 per annum. The present gross value is £1379 per annum.

endowed with an appropriate allotment of tithes, liberally granted by the Rev. Canon Edward Clayton, M.A., late Rector of Astbury.

The Rev. Edward Clayton resigned the Astbury benefice in 1878 in exchange with the Rev. John Edmeades Colyer, M.A., the present Rector, for the rectory of Iffley, near Oxford. With the Rector of Astbury is vested the appointments to the five livings last mentioned.

Astbury Church is dedicated to St. Mary, and is situated about a mile away from the town of Congleton. With this, the mother Church, the town and its inhabitants have always been closely identified; the Mayor, with the proprietors of seven principal county houses in the neighbourhood, being one of the posts or *præpositi*[c] of the parish.

Dr. Ormerod, describing Astbury Church, writes: "The general design and execution of the church is suited to a rich collegiate establishment; and the finish of the ancient carvings and of the mutilated shrine works and figures in the stained glass is exquisite." Few vicissitudes have passed over the graceful structure since this description was written. Time perhaps has lent a deeper, richer tone to its exterior walls. Its quaint gargoyles remain but little changed. The surrounding acre has become wider spread with the memorials of generations departed. In the church's architecture are observed several characteristic specimens of different styles embodied in the tracery of its windows, the lofty nave, and wide capacious chancel; in its oaken screen and stalls; pillars, clustered and supporting gracefully-pointed arches; and its carved oak roofs.

The original edifice[d] was a much smaller one, probably consisting of nave and chancel only. The northern wall remains, the nave portion of which coincided with the present northern nave aisle, and the chancel with the present northern chancel aisle. The junctions of the masonry observed in these remains, which are Early English, or thirteenth century period, furnish abundant indications that this portion of the present edifice comprised the whole of the original building, conjectured by antiquaries to have been erected between the years 1240 and 1260.

[c] Prescriptive Churchwardens and lay Managers. They levied the Church Rate, so long as that impost lasted.

[d] Said to have been dedicated to St. Michael and All Angels.

The probable date of the reconstruction of the church may be gathered from benefactions bequeathed to it in wills, and by its architecture: Late Perpendicular, or sixteenth century period, being the prevailing style. No doubt the growing importance and population of the parish, especially of that integral portion of it, the borough of Congleton, required a larger church; and it was provided, as in numberless other instances not by wholesale destruction of the old but by its incorporation into the more stately new. Thus the tower and spire of the earlier building remain in their simple beauty, and while they would have been too small for a church of the present height and dimension, their semi detachment gives a peculiar grace to the whole group.

I have in my possession much information relative to the parochial history, and to the Church itself, which it was found impossible to include in the present work: this, with much interesting family history, it is proposed at some future time to utilise in a form companionable with the present volume.

The Bridge Chapel.

AT the time of the Reformation Congleton possessed two small churches, or as they were termed the Lower or Bridge Chapel, and the Higher Chapel. The former, it may be conjectured, was erected early in the fourteenth century as a chapel of ease to the mother church at Astbury, or (as its situation suggests) an oratory where travellers might pray when entering or leaving the town. Of its foundation there is no trace. In a Certificate of Church Goods made throughout the county,[a] 3 Edward VI., it is mentioned as possessing one *chales* and one bell.

Smith in his *Vale Royal*, describing Cheshire in Queen Elizabeth's time, remarks that Congleton had two churches, "one in the town and the other at the bridge-end on the other side of the Dane." Among the Depositions given at a Royal Commission held at Northwich, 8 Elizabeth, (1566) is the following note describing its exact situation: "That there are neither lands nor tenements belonging to the said chapel, and that the said chapel

[a] Record Office. Together with the letter appointing the returns to be made.

is now converted to no use, but stands upon the Bridge end, and so is maintained for the defence of the said Bridge, and that the foundations of the said chapel form part of the foundations of the said Bridge."[b] The appearance and situation of this old half-timbered building, probably not unlike the neighbouring chapels of Marton and Siddington, standing almost beside the water's edge, with its black painted beams, plastered walls, and diaper-shaped windows, the river and the old Corn Mill close by, must have been far more picturesque than the present locality with its pyramids of brick can possibly suggest.

Reginald Brodok, son and heir of John de Brodok of Congulton, by the command and assignation of the said John, his father, gives, grants and by this his present charter confirms to Philip de Grene, Mayor of the town of Congulton and to his successors, Mayors for the time being, one parcel of land lying in the lordship of Congulton, viz: between the land of the Duke of Lancaster of the one part and the water of the Dane opposite "le Hertuslup" [Hart's leap] of the other part. To have and to hold the said parcel of land with its appurtenances to the said Philip and to his successors, freely, quietly, well and in peace of the chief lord of the fee by the service thence due and of right accustomed for ever, under the following conditions, viz: that the Mayor and his successors shall faithfully pay and deliver the rent or profit of the said land to the work and sustentation of the "Bridge Chapel" of Congleton, or the emendation of the said bridge according to their discretion, and that of the community of the said town, to the honor of God and to the health of the souls of the said John de Brodok and Alice his wife for the construction and making the said chapel there, and for the souls of their ancestors and heirs for ever. And if it happen the said Mayor or his successors in future detain or abstract the said rent or profit of the said land against this ordination that then it shall be lawful to the said Reginald and his heirs to enter into the said land, and hold the same to him and his heirs of the chief lords of the fee by the service thence due and of right accustomed notwithstanding the said concession. Witnesses: Philip de Grene, then Mayor of the said town, John de Lathum, cachepolle there, Ralph de Somerford, Robert de Yate, William de Morton, Hugh de Lathum, Richard de Brodok, and others. Dated at Congleton the sunday next after the feast of St. Giles abbot. 1 Henry V. (1413).[c]

John de Lathum, son of Hugh de Lathum, of Congleton, bequeathes certain land in *le Netherfeld* for the work and sustentation of the Bridge Chapel of Congulton, (1423.)

[b] Record Office.

[c] Town Records.

Ralph de Pedley, by Charter dated at Congulton (1424) grants an annual rent of 18d. arising from a plot of land in Congleton to be devoted to the same cause.

Roger de Moreton, Mayor of Congleton, by his will dated the Feast of St. Valentine the Martyr, 1437, left the sum of 3s. 4d. "of lawful money of England" to be expended "about the reparation and sustentation of the Lower Chapel" and Bridge of Congleton.

The date of this chapel's disuse as a place of worship is uncertain. Camden, writing in 1586, remarks that Congleton had then but one chapel in it, which of course would be the higher one; and in the absence of proof to the contrary it may be concluded that the "Lower" building had ceased to be used for divine service long before Smith wrote his *Vale Royal of England*. Its early history after this period is uncertain until the beginning of the seventeenth century, when a portion of the building was used as a storehouse for the town's use, and the remainder leased to George Lee, Bellfounder, who set up his foundry there.

Lee must have been a founder of some importance. When at Congleton, in 1608, he cast the great bell of Nantwich, which weighed 20 cwt. and 60 lbs.[d]

In 1630 this ex-chapel foundry was tenanted by Paul Hutton, a noted bell founder of that age, who there cast a peal of bells for Brereton Church, the first three bells at Astbury,[e] and a little bell for Congleton higher Chapel. He also re-cast the "greate" bell and two smaller ones for the same chapel. The following extracts tend to illustrate what has just been written:

1631	Payd to John Newton ffor leadinge the great bell from the over Chappell to the lower Chappell 1*s.* 6*d.* [to be recast]			
	Payd to Paul Hutton, Bell founder, in p[ar]te of the debtt owinge him by the towne for the greate Bell	3	5	0
1635	Payd to Peter Hodgkinson for one pottle of Sacke and one pottle of Claret wyne that was bestowed upon the Lord Brereton at the castinge of Brereton Bells	0	4	0
	Paid to M[r] Paul Hutton for foure score and fouer pounds and a halfe of Mettall in the 2 bells wch they weyghed more after they were [re]cast	4	10	0
	Paid for waste of mettall in the great bell being 13 hundred weight and a halfe	3	2	6

[d] Hall's "Nantwich," page 119.

[e] The first and third bells are dated 1639, and the second, 1647.

	Spent upon them who helped to gett downe the bells and to gett them up again	0	2	6
	Payd Mr Paull Hutton for the little Bell	4	10	0
1635	Paid to Mr Paul [Hutton] wch was agreed to give him 40*s.* for the new castinge off the great bell, that is, 30*s.* in money and 10*s.* *wch he owed of towne's rent for the lower Chappell*	1	10	0

(*Town Accounts.*)

The next occupier of the foundry was one of the Oldfields, a descendant of the Nottingham bellfounders. Henry Oldfield, bellfounder, conjectured to be the son of Henry Oldfield, of Nottingham, who was living in 1558,[f] might have been descended from the Cheshire family of that name, of whom there were several living in and near Congleton during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He certainly was connected with the town earlier than 1595, and it is thought that possibly the Congleton Foundry was first started by him, and the business afterwards carried on successively by Lea, Hutton, and others. There is however but little to support this conjecture beyond the fact that the same Henry married a Congleton lady, namely, Mary, daughter of Richard Spencer, gent., and several times Mayor of the town.

As a bellfounder Henry Oldfield was famous throughout the Midland and Eastern Counties; his initials and those of his descendants being frequently found on bells still existing. In 1595 he cast the first and second bells for the higher Chapel of Congleton, entering into a bond with "Willmo Stubbes, Maior de Congleton," in the sum of £40 to keep the same tunable during his the said Henry's life. This document, which is preserved amongst the Town Records,[g] begins with the agreement neatly inscribed in Latin and the conditions of the same in English, as follows:

"The condicon of this obligacon is such that if the above bounden Henrie Owtfeld doe at all tymes and from tyme to tyme hereafter, duringe his naturall lyfe, uphold two newe bels lately cast by ye said Henrie, that is to say, the first and ye second bels now hanginge in the steeple at ye chappell of Congleton foresaid, to continue sound and tunable, and of true accord w^th^ ye great bell there. And also if the said first and second bels, at any tyme duringe ye life of the said Henry, do breake or be not tunable, that then if the said Henry do or shall w^th^in one quarter of a yeare, havinge twenty dayes warning beforehand, to be left by the maior of Congleton foresaid, for the

[f] Earwaker's "Local Gleanings," 8vo edition, page 197.

[g] Vol. i., Miscellaneous Papers.

tyme beinge, his deputy or assignes, in or at the nowe dwellinge house of Ric Spencer, of Congleton, foresaid, gent. father in lawe to ye said Henry Owtfield, new cast anie ye said bell or bells and uphold the same in full weight as nowe they are, so oft as is needfull, till they be tunable, that then this present obligacon to be void and of none effect, or els to stand and remayne in his full force, strength, effect, and vertue.

Signed,
HENRY OLDFIELD.

Sealed and delivered unto Mr. STUBBES before named, in the presence of

JOHN HOBSON. RIC DRAKEFORD.
MATHEW MORTON. WM HEATH.
JA: BROSTER, cler.[h]

1594 Item £iij: ix*s.* wch was lefte the laste quarter in the Boxe is payd forthe to Henrye Ouldfeyld in part of his monye for castynge the two last newe Bells, soe that there is but xij*d.* remainynge of ye £iij: x*s.*

1594-5 Payd Henry Ouldfeyld over and above the £iiij xii*s.* wch he before receved forth of the boxe in M^r^ Maiors custodye ... 1 0 0

(*Town Accounts.*)

The Christian names of the tenants mentioned in the following extracts do not appear:

1658	Receaved of M^r^ Ouldfeild for Rente for the Ould Chapel ...	0	10	0
1668	Receaved from the Belfounder	0	7	6
1670	Receaved from William Newton for Rent due from M^r^ Ouldfeild for the ould Chappell the somme of	0	5	0
1677	Rec^d^ of M^r^ Oldfeld the Bellfounder	0	7	6

(*Town Accounts.*)[i]

It is probable about this period the fomdry became deserted, for with the exeeption of the following entries no further name of any fomder is mentioned, neither is there evidence to show that these were actually of Congleton:

1682	Rec^d^ from M^r^ Noone, Bellfounder...	1	8	0
1708	Recv^d^ from Gabriel Smith for the casting of a bell	0	7	0

Continued changes beset the existence of this old deseerated place. Before 1730 a temporary restoration was effected, and its precincts converted into a Poor House, and so used until 1810,[j] when it was again deserted, and four years after, by order of the Corporation, it was pulled down.

[h] This document was first printed by Mr. Earwaker in his Local Gleanings, 8vo edition, pages 109—10.

[i] Where other items continue until 1680.

[j] The then new Workhouse was situated at Mossley. It did service for the Union until 1844, when the present commodious house at Arclid, five miles distant on the Sandbach road, was built.

POPULATION OF THE TOWNSHIPS OF THE OLD PARISH OF ASTBURY,

COPIED FROM THE GOVERNMENT RETURNS.

Names of Townships[a]	Houses in 1801			Population									Annual Assessable Value in 1815
	Inhabited	Uninhabited	Families	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	£
Newbold Astbury.	91		114	575	596	569	598	641	705	741	783	768	4229
Congleton . . .	828	27	862	3861	4616	6405	9352	9222	10517	12338	11344	11116	11189
Buglawton . . .	80	3	36	517	584	984	2087	1864	2052	2014	1629	1550	2969
Eaton	33	6		184	228	327	525		584	485	448	401	2239
Hulme Walfield .	15		16	122	118	108	109	122	131	111	107	113	2140
Somerford Booths.	40		45	250	267	285	297	265	274	220	241	216	2410
Smallwood . . .	82	1	90	492	496	584	554	606	619	590	602	578	3193
Odd Rode . . .	128	1	160	917	1003	1143	1300	1518	1853	2476	2964	3194	5970
Somerford . .	19		23	142	114	107	112	99	79	82	91	78	1612
cum Radnor . . .	2		2	14	12	14	20	11	24	25	34	29	360
Moreton-cum-Alcumlow . . .	20		20	116	140	129	141	148	133	119	114	117	1705
Davenport . . .	14		15	89	89	96	103		111	117	86	82	1455

[a] All included in Congleton Union, except Eaton, in Macclesfield Union, which in 1836 (when the new Union was formed) had a population of 525.

The Higher Chapel.

FOUNDED by the ancient rulers of the town probably during the fourteenth century, the "Higher" or "Over" Chapel occupied the same site as the present parish church, St. Peter's; and was intended as a private chapel for the Corporation and to ease the citizens of their long journeys to and from the mother church, at Astbury. Like its sister chapel on the bridge it was of wood and plaster construction, with a stone tower and chancel.

In the name of God, Amen. On the Feast of the Holy Innocents, 1442, I, Thomas Chell, of sound mind make my Testament in this manner. Imprimis, I leave my soul to God omnipotent, the blessed Mary and all the Saints, and my body to be buried within the church yard of the church of Astbury.....Item I leave iiij lbs. of wax to burn around my body on the day of sepulture. Item I leave to the service of the chapel of St. Mary of Astbury 12*d*. Item I leave to the altar of St. Katherine of Astbury 12*d*. Item I leave to the altar of St. Mary of Morton 12*d*. Item I leave to the Higher Chapel of Congleton 12*d*. Item I leave to the fabric and building of the parish church of Astbury 10*s*. Item I give and leave to William Johnson and Alice his wife, the half of one burgage with buildings thereon and its appurtenances situated between a tenement of Philip Grene's of the one part and a tenement of Henry Brokyshed's of the other part. To have and to hold the said half of one burgage with appurtenances to the same William and Alice for the term of their lives. And after the decease of the same William and Alice I will that the said half burgage with appurtenances shall remain to the Mayor of the town of Congulton and his successors for ever. To have and to hold to the same Mayor and his successors to the sustentation and reparation of the Higher Chapel of the town of Congulton for ever of the chief lords of the fee by the service thence due and of right accustomed. Itm I leave to the same William Johnson and Alice his wife one acre of land lying near "Lambert's loone"[a] between the King's way on the one part and Weleseroft on the other part, and likewise the half of another acre lying in "le Overwestfield" between the land of Sir Lawrence Fyton, Kt. of the one part and the land of Alexander Latham's of the other part. To have and to hold to the same William and Alice for the term of their lives and after their decease the said acre of land and the half of one acre with their appurtenances shall remain to the Mayor of the town of Congulton. To have and to hold to the same Mayor and his successors to the sustentation and reparation of the Lower Chapel and Bridge of the

[a] Lambert's Lane. The common belief has been that it was so called because General Lambert marched his army that way, whereas the present deed proves that it was so called two hundred years before Lambert ever saw it.

town of Congulton for ever of the chief lords of the fee by the service thence due and of right accustomed. Item I leave to Alice my daughter one croft lying near Holwey brooke and three butts lying near "Lamberts loone," and a certain parcel of land lying near Meerstall between the land of Philip Grene's of the one part and the land of Matilda Moreton's of the other part. To have and to hold the said croft, three butts, and parcel of land with appurtenances to the said Alice, her heirs and assigns for ever of the chief lords of the fee by the service thence due and of right accustomed. The residue of my goods not bequeathed as above I give and leave to William Johnson and Alice his wife my daughter, and I appoint them my executors that they ordain and dispose as it shall seem most expedient to them for the health of my soul. Dated the day and year above said.[b]

One Emma de Sheteswall, of Congleton, leaves to the Mayor of Congleton under certain conditions, lands and tenements in Congleton, the rent of which to be devoted "to the sustentation and reparation of the higher chapel." (1418.)

Margery Becheton, wife of Hugh de Becheton, bequeathes certain burgages of land "to the reparation of the Higher chapel of Congulton." (1422.)

Camden, writing in 1586, describes the building as being "entirely of wood, unless it be the quire and a little tower."[c] Webb, in his Itinerary, written *circa* 1625, speaks of the inhabitants as possessing "a handsome chapel in the town though they acknowledge Austbury their parish Church."

In the deposition of John Vardon taken during a litigation between the Rector of Astbury and the Corporation regarding the right of presentation to Congleton church,[d] it is shewn that John Vardon, gentleman,[e] aged 70 years and upwards, a native of Congleton, "Remembers the old Chapel that it was built of post and plaster, save the Chancel, which was built of stone and appeared to have been added to the Chapel after the first building of it. That it had the appearance of very great antiquity, but no date appeared upon it, and believes it had been erected some hundred years before it was taken down," (in 1740.)

[b] Town Records.

[c] "Britannia," 2nd edition, vol. i., page 676.

[d] Town Records, miscellaneous papers, vol. ii.

[e] John Vardon's father was of an old Congleton family, and Mayor of the borough several times. He himself was chosen a capital Burgess *circa* 1714, an Alderman in 1721, and served the office of Mayor four times.

AN ALLOTMENT OF SEATS IN THE OLD PAROCHIAL CHAPEL.[f]

An Order for plaeing of the Mayor and Aldermen and other the inhabitants in the Chappell of Congleton, being of the Parish of Astbury, made and appointed by the Reverend Father in God, William, by God's permission, Bishop of Chester, the 8th day of May, Anno Regni Dominæ Elizabethæ Reginæ &e. deeimo.

Imprimis, in the highest Seat of the Chappell of the south side shall sit and be placed at the time of Divine Serviee the Mayor of the town for the time being and to associate unto him at his will and pleasure the most antient Aldermen.

Item, in the highest seat of the Chappell on the north side shall sit and be placed the wife of the Mayor for the time being, and to associate unto her the most antient Aldermen's wives at her will and pleasure. Item in the second seat of the Chappell of the south side shall sit and be placed Aliee Rodd, Widdow, and the wife of William Morton or his Deputy. Item in the second seat on the north side shall sit and be placed the wives of Roger Green and R^d^ Spencer, Aldermen.

Item for the rest of the forms in the said Chappell the said Rev^d^ Father hath given Authority by Commission to Roger Green, Mayor for this year, Jno. Davenport the elder, Esq: Lawrenee Swettenham, Gent: W. Thorley, Alderman of the same Town, Randle Hankinson, and William Drakeford, or to five or four of the same.

Commissioners to plaee all and every one of the Inhabitants of the same Town aecording to their Estate and Degree.

ORDER FOR THE CHANCELL.

Imprimis in the highest pew on the north side where the Mayor was aeeustomed to sit, shall sit and be placed Richard Spencer, Alderman, for that his Aneestors were builders of the same chaneell.
Item in the seeond pew on that same side shall sit and be placed Roger Green and Jno. Walker, Aldermen.
Item in the third pew on the same side shall sit and be placed William Rodd, Alderman, and sueh other as it shall please him to associate to him for his life time.
Item in the highest pew on the south side shall sit and be plaeed William Morton and his sueeessors.
Item in the second seat shall sit Will: Thorley, Alderman, and whom it shall please him.
Item in the third pew shall sit Jno. Hobson, Will: Thorley, and Thos. Cumberbateh.

[f] Copied from a MS. in the possession of Major G. W. Hall, of Salford, co. Lancaster, to whom I am also indebted for other useful information.

THE NORTH SIDE.

3 in 3 form shall sit and be placed Wm. Morton of Eaton.

4 in 4 form shall sit and be placed Jno. Hobson, Ald., and Alex. Latham.

5 in 5 form shall sit and be placed W. Thorley and Thos. Cumberbatch, Ald.

6 in 6 form shall sit and be placed Jas. Smith and Humphrey Wolfe.

7 in 7 form shall sit and be placed Thos. Green and Thos. Walker.

8 in 8 form shall sit and be placed Jno. Brook, Richd. Laplove, and Thos. Stopport.

9 in 9 form shall sit and be placed Roger Leak, Jno. Stubbs, and Jno. Barker.

10 in 10 form shall sit and be placed Hugh Hankinson, James Morton, and Thomas Johnson.

11 in 11 form shall sit and be placed Wid: Hoodrow, Will. Hordron, and Margarett Davy.

12 in 12 form shall sit Alice Stubbs, Hugh Pointon, and Margarett Cumberbatch.

13 in 13 form shall sit Randle Pointon, Jno. Pointon, and Ralph Pointon.

14 in 14 form shall sit Hugh Summerville, Robt. Smith, and James Hulme.

15 in 15 form shall sit Hugh Oldham, Hy. Johnson, and Michael Sharman.

16 in 16 form shall sit Ellen Rooke, Hugh Twenefall, and Hugh Stonier.

17 in 17 form shall sit Roger Fox, John Holliday, and Thomas Thorley.

18 in 18 form shall sit William Meek, William Barlow, and Hugh Bann.

BENEATH THE DOOR.

1 Imprimis in the first form shall sit Ellice Shaw, Hugh Stoppat, and Giles Wagg.

2 in 2 form shall sit Peter Bowers, Jno. Blackshaw, and Jno. Hordron.

3 in 3 form shall sit Jno. Brownswood, Lawrence Conghon, and Catherine Howard.

4 in 4 form shall sit Peter Buckley, Thos. Hoodrow, and Matthew Pool.

5 in 5 form shall sit Randle Rooker, James Shaw, and Thomas Rudyard.

6 in 6 form shall sit Thomas Ward, Arthur Ward, and Randle Ward.

7 in 7 form shall sit Richard Cholls, Wid. Rathbone, Will. Okes, and Robert Wilkinson.

THE SOUTH SIDE.

3 in 3 form shall sit Jno. Walker, Alderman, and Richard Rode.

4 in 4 form shall sit Jno. Rode and William Rode, Ald.

5 in 5 form shall sit Randle Hankinson and Richd. Newton.

6 in 6 form shall sit William . . . . and Hugh Speneer.

7 in 7 form shall sit Jno. Scragg, Jno. Okes, and Wm. Drakeford.

8 in 8 form shall sit Margarett Foxholes, Plant's House, and Burgess's House.

9 in 9 form shall sit William Walker, Thomas Rodd, and the land [tenant] of Philip Pedley.

10 in 10 form shall sit Margarett Green, Robt. Newton, and George Foster.

11 in 11 form shall sit Edward Bate, William Sutton, and George Pass.

12 in 12 form shall sit Jeffery Wagg, Ralph Wagg, and James Rode.

13 in 13 form shall sit the Tennants of Geo. Lowe, Jno. Henshall, and Jno. Wagg.

14 in 14 form shall sit Wid. Wagg, Richd. Parnell, and James Brook.

15 in 15 form shall sit Robt. Hall, Roger Walmesley, and John Hughson.

16 in 16 form shall sit Alexander Batch, Hugh Tollett, and William Morton, Junr.

17 in 17 form shall sit Hugh Johnson, William Shaw, and William Ward.

18 in 18 form shall sit Richard Gallimore, Peter Ward, and William Davenport.

BENEATH THE DOOR.

1 in 1 form shall sit William Mottershead, Jno. Bayly, Thomas Braser, and William Barlow.

2 in 2 form shall sit Roger Rooker, Wid. Slater, Wid. Cook, and Wid. Dale.

3 in 3 form shall sit Jno. Shaw, Jno. Yarwood, Hugh Wagg, and Thomas Ackinson.

4 in 4 form shall sit Thos. Jibson, William Tunstall, Richard Johnson, and Richard Harding.

5 in 5 form shall sit Widow Turner and Wid. Cook.

Item for the seats joined to the walls on either side the Chapell shall sit and be placed the inhabitants of the Town according as they shall come to Divine Service.

Concluded and agreed by us,

ROGER GREEN, Mayor.
W. A. DRAKEFORD. pro DAVENPORT.
WILL: THORLEY.
RANDLE HANKINSON.

The chancel, to have held the persons named in the foregoing, with the choir and clergy, must have been of ample dimensions. It was adorned with the King's Arms and Commandments. A Faculty, dated 12 Nov. 1705, was granted from the Episcopal Registry at Chester for the erection of two Galleries; and also in 1712 further accommodation was provided. The following extracts are taken from the Town Accounts:

1598	For a Deske in the Chapple to laye the Bible uppon	0	2	6
1609	Item for a Church Ley towards the pulpett...	1	0	0
1613	Item payde John Dale[s] for building two Isles at the Chappell ...	10	0	0
	Paide more for buildinge the poarche	3	0	0
1634	payd for paynttinge dyvers sentences and texts of scripture in the Church and Chancel	1	10	0
	Payd to Thomas Sutton for paynttinge the Kinge's Armes and Ten Commandmentts which hange in the Church	1	0	0
1698	for green silke for the pulpitt cloth and cushen	0	10	9
	pd. for dressing the feathers for parsons cushen	0	0	6
	for 3 yards of fine green broad cloth for parsons cushen and pulpitt cloth	1	16	0

A few curious extracts relating to the old chapel and Preachers, also taken from the Town Accounts, are here given:

1584	Imprimis payd Thomas Smalwood for settynge upp the Reyles in the church yarde	0	6	8
	Item given to a precher that made a sermon att the chappell ...	0	2	6
1588	payd Bryan Hardyn for glazsynge the Chappell wyndoes... .	4	0	0
	payd John Slyn for stayes to the Chappell wyndoes	0	1	0
1588	payd Thoms Davemporte ye Reader his quarters wages	1	0	0
1589	Payd Wyllm Heath for mendynge the locke of the Chappell cofer and for ii plates to the Chancell dore	0	0	6
1589	Sir Roger Wyllyams the curate his quarters wages	1	13	4
1591	Payd for vij yards of clothe to make a surplece	0	12	6
	Payd Thomas Drakeforde for a Communion boke...	0	6	4
	Payd for bred & wyne for ye communicants	0	4	0
1591	Payd that was bestowed uppon Mr. Cawdwell when he preched at ye chapple	0	7	4
1592	Payd Mr. Pryse for saying service ij Sabothe dayes	0	2	0
	Payd Mr. Thomas Lowndes for saying service on the Sabothe ...	0	1	0
1592	Imprimis payd Mr. Edwarde Danner the precher his quarters wage	2	10	0
1593	Spent upon Mr. Rudyard the precher & others	0	3	8
1594	Payd the plumner for mendynge the leads on the steeple... ..	0	10	0
1594	Payd Mr. Broster the Mynister & Scholemaster his quarters wages	3	6	8
	Payd that was bestowed upon towe prechers that preched at the Chapple	0	6	0
1595	payd that was geven Mr. Palmer of Macclesfeyld for prechyng ...	0	5	0
	payd for iij quarts of wyne that was bestowed upon Mr. Gerrarde & upon Mr. Stopporte for prechyng	0	2	0
1597	for Candlelyghte bestowed at mornynge prayes	0	2	10
1597	payd that was given one Mr. Smythe of Manchester that preached upon New Years Daye	0	10	0

[s] Probably a son of "Richard Dale, Carpeder," who erected the beautiful oriel windows at Little Moreton Hall in 1552.

1598	payd Robt. Tylder for gettynge mosse to mose the over Chapple	0	1	2
1598	payd for dynners for Mr. Carre of Mydelwich & others in his company when he preached ij sermons here	0	5	0
1601	payd for a tree whereof was made the lyttle steyles & the gate in ye chapple yarde...	0	6	4
1601	payd Rich. Spencer more for a dynner bestowed on Mr. Symson, preacher at Syddington & others in his company, when he preached on Maye day last, and for a quart of wyne... ...	0	3	4
	[Mr. Symson appears to have been serving the cure of Syddington during the illness of the Rev. George Hale, who held the curacy from 1593 to 1604. His name occurs in the Mayor's Accounts for the quarter ending 25 March, 1602,—"Payd for a dinner bestowed on Mr. Symson, preacher at Syddington, and his boyes dinner w^ch^ Mr. Symson preached in Easter week, x*d.*"]			
1606	Bestowed upon Mr. Ferdinando Mellvyn that preached here the 5th of November, 1606	0	6	11
	Bestowed upon Mr. Allen when he preached here...	0	3	4
	ij quarts of sacke bestowed upon Mr. Stevenson when he preached	0	2	0
1607	Bestowed upon Mr. Robert Brooke, ye prcher, 6 Aprill	0	3	4
	payd to Mr. Lightfoote that preached here...	0	10	0
	Item bestowed upon Mr. Wardle, preacher, of Bosley, ffor his sermon the sixth of September...	0	10	0
	[William Wardle occurs in the records of the Consistory Court at Chester as "Curate of Bosley" in 1608.]			
1608	bestowed uppon the ringers the 5th of Novemb. beyng the Kinge's hollydaie, in bred & ale	0	0	6
1609	payd for wyne & suger bestowed upon Mr. Dodd & Mr. Farryngton that preached here	0	8	6
1613	Item paide for leadinge one loade of stone from the Cloude ...	0	2	4
	payde for goynge to Madeley for bords for our peues in the Chappell	0	1	0
1614	payd for wyne and Mr. Montford's dynner whe[n] he preached whe[n] Mr. Capps was gone from home	0	1	4
1616	paid for a Statute book & a prayer booke wch is to be said & read in ye Church upon the Gunpowder Treason Day	0	5	4
1622	paid for drinke bestowed upon those who did help to draw up the Bells into the steeple	0	1	0
	paid for a wether cocke for the steeple	0	6	6
1631	paid to Chantlow of Alderley for mendinge ye clock at ye Chappell	0	3	4

[The correct name is Chantwell. Roger Chantwell, a blacksmith at Nether Adderley, acquired more than local fame as a horologist. In the church books at Prestbury is the following memorandum relating to him: "Mra, that upon the xxvj^th^ day of September, 1630, the churchwardens, namely, John Mottershed, James Pickford, Piers Holland, and Roger Gaskell, for the consideration of Twenty shillinge by them gyven to Roger Chantwell, of Neth. Adderley, blacksmith, have agreed with him that he should workmanly repeyre the Clock at Prestbury and make the same in good order, and from tyme to tyme mayntene and keepe the same clock in sufficient repeyre and good order only for workmanship during his wall life for the Considcration above mentioned all materialls being found him by the p'ishon'rs for the same tools to work w^th^. In witness of w^ch^ agreement the said Churchwardens as also the said Roger Chantwell have here under putt their names and m'kes."

R. C.

JOHN MOTTERSHED. JAMES PICKFORD.
PIERS HOLLAND. ROGER GASKELL.

Witness to agreement above said

THO. JEYNSON, Vicar.
HUGHE WORRALL.]

	To Richard Green for making of a new Beire & for a boord used at the Chappell	0	2	0
1632	paide Justice Drakeforde for wyne and shuger bestowed upon Dr. Dodd when he preached & upon Mr. Leigh's Chappleyn ..	0	5	10
	[This was Thomas Dodd, D.D., of the family of Dodd of Shocklack, an eloquent and famous preacher. He was Chaplain to the King, Archdeacon of Richmond, Dean of Ripon, Prebendary of Chester, and Rector of Astbury. He preached before James I. at Nantwich when the King made his progress through Cheshire in 1617. He is thus referred to in the "Autobiography" of Henry Newcome, the Nonconformist divine: "When my eldest brother (Robert Newcome) after he was Batchelor in Arts, was Master of the Free School at Congleton, in Cheshire, I was in the year 1641, about May 4, brought down thither to him, and there went to school three quarters of a year, until Feb. 13. at which time that eloquent and famous preacher, Dr. Thomas Dodd, was parson at Astbury, the parish church of Congleton, where I several times (though then but a child) heard him preach."]			
1634	payd to Richard Greene for new Chest to laye in the Church bookes, the surpliece, and pulpitt clothes	0	12	0
1638	paide to Richarde Hulme for leadinge stonne for the pynnacles from Biddulphe Moore	0	6	4
1642	To John Lowe for the preachers dinner upon an exercise day ...	0	4	8
1646	Paid John Antrobus the rest of his money for his workmanship, some few nayles and gleu at the bellhouse doore, the clocke, and for setting up the old hatches to keppe boyes fr[om] climbinge over into the church and for putting in 13^{teene} new pillars	0	16	0
1650	Pd Roger Kent (of the Swan) for one exercise dinner for sack and other things	1	5	6
1681	for several sorts of Colours for the Chancel...	0	2	0
	for 4 yards of linnen for the Chappell	0	4	0
	Pd for thred & making it fit for a frame	0	0	2
	ffor ringes & hookes to hang the frame in the chancell	0	1	0
1686	pd Roger ffletcher for lead for ye font	0	7	0
1698	for daubeinge ye Church & findinge clay	0	1	1
1711	Mr. Barrott for oyle & ocher to culler ye church	0	2	9
1713	paid for 2 candlesticks for ye church	0	3	0
1733	2 load lime for peinting steeple	0	2	4

St. Peter's Church.

IN 1740 a Faculty was given the inhabitants to take down the "parochial Chapple" described as "old and decayed," and to rebuild the same on an enlarged plan. The work was commenced the same year, and completed before the close of 1742.

The present church, dedicated to St. Peter, stands on high ground in Chapel Street. It is a rectangular brick building, with stone tower at the west end; a nave and two side aisles, and galleries on its north, south, and west portions. The inhabitants, successful in obtaining a structure ample in its

St. Peter's Church.

proportions, and graceful in its interior, according to the style of the times, sought not to combine therewith any external architectural pretensions: and the long exterior walls of brick, bare and unbroken, present an appearance neither elegant nor churchlike. Two stories of the ancient Tower (to the level of the roof) were permitted to remain, though sorely mangled by the modernised west door and circular belfry window. The completion of the Tower was deferred to 1786, by the addition of the clock chamber, belfry, and parapet, surmounted by eight massive stone pinnacles.[a]

Entering the church by the west door, the interior, in the Wren style of architecture, bears a marked resemblance to that great master's church of St. Martin's in the Fields, and is a stately specimen of its period (1740). The chancel end is lighted by a large Venetian window. Well executed paintings of St. Paul and St. Peter adorn the walls on either side of this window, and written in gold on the centre panels of the fine oak reredos are the Commandments, with the Creed on one side, and the Lord's Prayer on the other. Pilasters of oak, with floriated capitals, divide these inscriptions, surmounted with heads of cherubs beautifully carved in oak but some years ago unfortunately painted white. Above the reredos and immediately under the great window is the emblematic "pelican" feeding her young from her own blood; excellently carved.

The NAVE is divided from the north and south aisles by seven square massive columns on each side, over which are raised galleries with oak-panelled fronts. Above the galleries, the columns up to the roof are exchanged by massive circular stone pillars of the Tuscan order.

The PEWS are made in the old square and long box-shaped character, and in keeping with the other wood work, are of dark coloured oak. There is church accommodation for over 1200.

The former PULPIT, reading desk, and clerk's seat were of very fine workmanship, of the old-fashioned three-storied construction always found in Churches of this type. They were removed about ten years ago. A reading stand was erected on the south side of the chancel, the clerk's seat abolished, and the old polygonal-shaped reading desk, removed from Astbury

[a] Mr. R. Burslam, of Congleton, undertook to raise the Tower for the sum of £450. By a private note in the old mason's pocket book I find the actual cost was £599 7s. 4d. and that after deducting £24, value of old lead, he was the loser of £125 7s. 4d.

Church, was erected in the place of the original lofty Pulpit, on a stone pedestal.

In the west gallery is the ORGAN and CHOIR. The instrument, built by Messrs. Renn & Boston, of Manchester, at a cost of £1000, is of beautiful and perfect tone: it was placed in the Church during the year 1824. Mr. S. C. Eyre, the present organist, has held the appointment for over thirty years.

The VESTRY is by the west entrance, on the south side, near which is the FONT, of plain marble. There are entrances on the north and south portions leading to the galleries, the former having a substantial porch of stonework erected about forty-five years ago.

The entire length of the Church is 24½ yards, and its width is 18¼ yards, lighted by two rows on each side of six windows each, all of plain glass, set in iron frames, with orange coloured borders.[b]

The PAROCHIAL REGISTERS are quite without interest. Before 1720 they were taken to Astbury, and a portion from 1711 to 1744 are included in a volume of the Astbury Registers. The oldest Baptisms and Burials, namely, from 1719 to 1783, are bound together in one vellum-covered volume, and kept in the vestry safe.

Bells.

FREQUENT allusion has already been made to the Bells hanging in the old tower. *Circa* 1558 these were two in number, one of which became disused during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. In 1594 Henry Oldfield cast two new ones,[a] and in 1624 a fourth or "great bell" was added.

1624	Spent the xiiij daie of November in goeinge throughe Buglawton, myselfe Maior, Mr. Ald. Hobson, Mr. Ald. Drakeforde, Mr. Ald. Rode, Wm. Baylie and others, Mr. Ald. Poynton beinge in Companie with us, after our returne, wee travellinge all daie to know what the Inhabitance of Buglawton would bestowe towardes our greatest and new bell	0	2	8
1630	paid for foure Bellropes bought at Nottingham	0	10	0

(*Town Accounts.*)

[b] Originally the windows were filled with small oblong panes, set in lead, which were changed about fifty years ago.

[a] See page 168.

Paul Hutton, the Congleton Founder, recast three of the old bells, and added a treble bell *circa* 1635. In 1720 the five bells were recast into six by "the old Church and State Bell-founders," the Rudhalls, of Gloucester. These were rehung in the new tower.[b]

Articles of Agreement had made concluded and agreed upon the ffifteenth day of November Anno Dni one thousand seaven hundred and twenty between the Mayor Ald^rmen & Burgesses of the Burrough of Congleton in the County of Chester of the one part and Abraham Rudhall the young^r of the City of Gloucester Bellfounder of the other part ffirst it is agreed that if Mr. Mayor thinks fitt to deliver the five Bells & Clappers now belonging to the Chappell of the s^d Burrough at Salop betwixt & the Twenty ffifth day of March next ensueing the s^d Abraham Rudhall shall be at the charge of fetching and carrying them away to Gloucester af^d make them into six good new tuneable Bells & sshall deliver the s^d six new Bells at Salop afors^d as soon as he can & shall also make six good new Clappers for the s^d Bells & deliver the same there at the same time.

Item it is agreed & the s^d Mayor Ald^rmen & Burgesses for themselves & their success^rs do covenant & agree to pay to the s^d Abraham Rudhall his Executors or Admrato^rs for the casting the s^d new Bells & for the new clappers the sume of ffourty pounds within three months after the s^d six new Bells & Clappers sshall be delivered at Salop safe as aforesaid.

Item it be agreed that the s^d six new Bells shall containe in weight as near as may be to the six old ones & that ffour pounds wast shall be allowed for every hundred weight & that the s^d Mayor Ald^rmen & Burgesses & their sucecss^rs shall pay to the s^d Abraham Rudhall for every pound of additionall mettall to the s^d new Bells ffourteen pence and the s^d Abraham Rudhall shall also allow the Corporation fourteen pence for every pound weight the new Bells shall want in weight of the old ones allowing for wast as aforesaid.

Item It is agreed & the s^d Abraham Rudhall doth coven^t and agree to and with the s^d Mayor Ald^rmen & Burgesses and their sucecss^rs that if any of the new Bells break or are not tuneable within one year after they are hung up that then he shall exchange the same at his own costs & cause the same to be hung up so soon as may be. In wittnesse whereof the said parties to these p^rsents their hands and seals have hereunto interchangeably set and put the day and year first above written.

Sealed and Delivered in the presence of

R. H. Throp.
Randle Dale.

Abr. Rudhall, Junr.

(Seal.)

[b] Town Records, Miscellaneous Papers, vol. ii.

Since rebuilding the Church the Bells have been changed at different intervals,[c] and now form an octave of rich and perfect tone: they bear the following inscriptions:

[1] STAINBANK FOUNDRY, LONDON. JOHN GREEN, DEPUTY WARDEN. THOMAS STATON, RINGER. 1867.

[2] STAINBANK FOUNDRY. WILLIAM SHEPARD WILLIAMSON, THOMAS POTTER JOHNSON, CHURCHWARDENS. 1867.

[3] THOMAS MEARS & SON, OF LONDON. FECIT 1806.

[4] GOD DIRECT THE CONSULTATIONS OF THE CORPORATION. 1720.

[5] THOMAS SHAW, JNO. JACKSON, JNO. WOOD, ALDERMEN. A.R. 1720.

[6] PETER LINGARD, JNO. SHAW, JNO. VARDEN, ALDERMEN. A.R. 1720.

[7] PROSPERITY TO THIS PARISH. A.R. 1757.

[8] STAINBANK FOUNDRY. HUNG IN ST. PETER'S BELFRY, 1867. JOHN LATHAM, MAYOR, CONGLETON. REV. J. HUGHES, A.B., MINISTER.

What is known as the "Pan-cake bell," or "*Goodit*" (Good Tide) bell is still rung at 11 a.m. on Shrove Tuesday, when the boys from the Grammar School are released for the day. This custom has existed far beyond the memory of man. The noon, or "one o'clock bell," and the Curfew, are rung each day: the latter at 8 o'clock. As late as 1839 the sixth or tenor bell was rung each night during the week at 10, and on Sunday at 9: when publicans were obliged to clear their houses.

Ministers.

THE names of the Ministers or Curates, now printed for the first time, have been gathered from the Town Records, where, in the old Mayor's Accounts, the "mynyster's" stipends, or as it appears, "quarter's wage," were paid (often very irregularly) in sums varying from twenty shillings to twenty-five pounds. The appointment of the clergyman was in olden time

[c] The treble bell, taken from the tower in 1867, bore the inscription "Ra: Malbon, Minister & Schoolmaster, A.D. 1720." See under Grammar School.

always claimed to be merely during the pleasure of the Mayor and Corporation, with whom the nomination remained vested until the passing of the Municipal Act of 1835, when by law the advowson was compelled to be sold. In several instances the minister combined with his office at the church the mastership of the small free Grammar School, also in the Corporation gift, and in this way the combination of the two salaries, with the trifling quarterages of the pupils, made the function more worthy the attention of clerical gentlemen of learning and position according to the times. Those marked with an asterisk filled the office of minister and schoolmaster combined.

[*Sir*][a] Roger Wyllyams, 1588–90.

[*Sir*] Samuel Humphray, 1590–1.

Mr. Danner, 1592–4.

James Broster,* 1594– .

Mr. Price,* 1610– .

Mr. Loddington,* (From Oxford,) 1620–22.

Mr. Redman,* 1622–37.

(1637) Ordered by the Mayor, &c., "that Mr. Redman, Minister, shall have his former wages allowed, and well and truly paid to him by contenting himself therewith, and ordering himself otherwise as is fit, and in default a new minister to be chosen."

Andrew Bowrey,* 1638–40.

Francis Ford, 1643–4.

Mr. Smith, 1644.

John Pemberton, 1648–49.

On St. Bartholomew's Eve, 1645, the Long Parliament, then become the predominant power as the result of the Civil War, carried Republican tyranny so far as to pass an ordinance for the suppression of the Book of Common Prayer. It was decreed

[a] *Sir* was the customary prefix to the name of an ecclesiastic at this time.

that all copies of it should be given up to the authorities (!) of the period to be destroyed; and any one hereafter convicted of using the book in public *or private* should be liable to a fine of £5 for the first offence, (!) £10 for the second, and if convicted again a third time should be imprisoned for a year. Mr. Smith, it would appear, refused to stay in his uncomfortable cure on the terms, and the Corporation seem to have been left without a regular pastor for four years. Dr. Hutchinson, the Rector of Astbury, was ejected, and the benefice divided between two Nonconformist divines[b], who for a short time jointly occupied the Rectory.

While there was always a substratum of loyalty and church feeling in the borough, the heads of the Corporation, under the influence of the Parnells, Bradshaw, and the like, ruled the unhappy little town during the Cromwell usurpation with a rod of iron. In 1648 they "hired" a Presbyterian minister, named John Pemberton, who however stayed but little over a year at Congleton, when he signed the Cheshire Attestation in 1648 as Pastor of Congleton. He removed to Chester in 1650, and succeeded Benjamin Ball as pastor of St. John the Baptist.[c]

Thomas Brook, 1649–61.

Thomas Brook, also a Presbyterian divine, removed from Gawsworth to Congleton in 1650, when he received his first "quarter's wage" as minister of the higher chapel. Calamy chronicles him as being "a humble good man, a great adversary to pride, and no mean scholar, of which some manuscripts of his give full proof. It was true of him, as of Knox, that he never feared the face of man. His reproofs, though blunt, were always levelled against sin, and often were ingenious, keen, and convictive. He took great pains to serve his Master. He expounded in the public chapel in Congleton on Lord's Day morning by six o'clock. He expounded, prayed and preached both morning and afternoon; and repeated in public in the evening. He preached also on Tuesdays and Fridays."[d] A proof of this worthy man's fervency in exhortation was manifested in the

[b] John Machin and George Moxon. See Nonconformity.

[c] "Nonconformity in Cheshire," page 13.

[d] *Ibid* page 153, from the paper contributed by Dr. Beales, (see Mayors) in which able work much of this information appears.

nickname of "bawling Brook" being affixed on him by the cavalier townsfolk of "the better end."

Mr. Brook in his turn was dispossessed for Nonconformity after the Restoration; and here let a very pleasing touch of Christian liberality be recorded. Dr. Hutchinson, after being five or six years plundered of his benefice of Astbury, and being now restored, shewed his personal respect for poor Brook by inviting him to preach for one Sunday his last sermons in the old parish church, which was crowded by Congletonians on the occasion.

Mr. William Moreton, of old Moreton Hall, was his friend and patron, who after Brook's dismissal from Congleton opened his own private chapel to him, where he preached until his death in 1664, at the age of seventy-two.

The confusion occasioned by the ejectment of Brook delayed the selection for several months of a new minister. See the following order: (1661) "Ordered that every one of this Comsell doe endeav[r] to procure A minist[r] to supply this place ffor one Sabboath day a peice, untill such tyme as an able minist[r] shall bee agreed upo[n] by this comsell to bee Hired, to bee constant minist[r] w[th]in the said Burrough, and that in the meanetyme, there bee ten shillings a Sabboath paid out of the co[m]mon stocke, unto such Minist[r] as shall be procured by any one, and that M[r] Maio[r] do provide ffor the ffirst Sabboath, and for every one else in their severall and respective places ffor the Sabboaths ffollowinge."

1668, Mr. Barber.*

It is uncertain whether Mr. Barber was the first incumbent after the expulsion of Mr. Brook. He is mentioned as schoolmaster in 1663, and is styled curate in 1668, in which year he was suspended. "Beinge that M[r] Barber, minister, hath negleeted and slited the whole Towne very much, it is this day ordered that hee shall not preach any more in our Chappell."

1669, Mr. Armstrong.

Mr. Armstrong was chosen after the dismissal of Barber, receiving 9s. 6d. per week "untill such tyme as hee doth miscarry himselfe in any thinge Agaynst the Towne." How long he was fortunate enough to please the powers that then were is

uncertain. In 1675 Rev. John Latham, of Cambridge University, son of John Latham, who was Mayor in 1666–7, was offered the vacancy, which he declined.

1674–6, Mr. Harrison.

Ordered "that Mr Harrison be hired to be Minister of the Chapel of this borough."

1676–81, Rev. Richard Jackson.

He subsequently became chaplain to Sir Thomas Bellot, Bart.

1681–4, Rev. John Hancock.

1684– , Rev. John Whittaker.*

1690–8, Rev. Thomas Lowndes.

1698–1721, Rev. Ralph Malbon.*

Ralph Malbon, one of the most eminent ministers and schoolmasters Congleton ever had, was the son of Thomas Malbon, Alderman and draper, a wealthy Presbyterian, who during the contest between William of Orange and James II. openly avowed his opposition to the royal party. He was Mayor of the town in the year 1685–6. Ralph Malbon's election was much opposed by the Rector of Astbury and others, who contested the right of nomination being with the Mayor and Corporation. A petition, praying against his institution, was presented to the Bishop, alleging that not only was he a Roundhead and a dissenter, but that he had never been baptised (!) It is said Bishop Gastrell was inclined to favour this petition, but with the advice of the Chancellors of London and York, and concurrence of his own Chancellor, he adjudged the right of nomination to be vested in the Mayor and Corporation, recommending that the minister nominated "should make application to the Rector of Astbury for his recommendation to the Bishop for a lycense to serve the cure, which if the said Rector should refuse without any legal exception against the said minister, the Bishop then to grant his lycense to the minister notwithstanding."

During this controversy, William Hackney, sworn before Mr. Mainwaring, deposed "that he remembered 13 Curates

nominated or elected to the living without the Rector of Astbury interposing; and that the Corporation nominated, placed, or displaced the Curates as they thought fitt."[e]

After the Bishop's decision, a portion of the Corporation being in favour of Mr. Malbon and the other portion for a Mr. Hammond, the choice was taken by vote, whereupon Mr. Malbon obtaining the majority, was elected by the Corporation and nominated by Mr. Hutchinson, Rector of Astbury. He became also master of the Grammar School in 1709. He was ever noted for his charitable and benevolent disposition, and he gave large sums of money towards renewing the old and building the present church; and for these and other acts, Peter Shakerley, Esq., before his death presented a large silver chalice to the church in respect for this excellent man; and his arms, graven in stone, were affixed, sixty-five years after his death, with those of the town on the west side of the tower of the present church. He died at the early age of 50, and was buried in the yard, on the south side of the church, 9th Nov., 1721.

1722–68, Rev. William Watwood.

On the death of Mr. Malbon, the old dispute between the Rector of Astbury, Philip Egerton, and the Corporation, again arose, when Mr. Watwood was instituted by the Bishop, who nominated by lapse. During his life the new church was built. He died Jan. 21st, 1768, and was buried in the chancel, his memorial stone being unfortunately now hidden by the raised wooden flooring recently laid down. The stipend about this time was increased by the Rev. William Stanley, Dean of St. Asaph, who advanced £200, and obtained another £200 from the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty for the purpose. In 1809 the annual value of the living was returned by the Bishop at £126 6s. 10d., arising from stipend, official house, and surplice fees; which was increased to its present value, namely £259, by a munificent grant of tithes from the Rev. E. Clayton, late Rector of Astbury. The parish contains a population of nearly 3500. The schools, which are well built and commodious, are situated near the church, and afford accommodation for a large number of Sunday and day scholars.

[e] "Town Records," Miscellaneous Papers, vol. ii.

1768–85, Rev. Richard Sandbach.

His nomination was also opposed by the Rector of Astbury, the Rev. Dr. Joseph Crewe, but again adjudged by the Bishop to be vested with the Corporation, who retained the same without further hindrance until the Municipal Act became law, when under the provisions of the Act the advowson had to be sold; but from reluctance to carry out this requirement the matter stood over for above thirty-five years, and the successive bishops of Chester meanwhile made two excellent appointments by lapse, namely, those of the Revds. T. B. Ingham and John Hughes. Ultimately, however, in 1860 the advowson was sold for £500 to Mr. Thomas Rowley, of London and Overton, whose daughter and co-heiress (Mrs. Hugh William Williamson, of Ramsdell Hall,) is the present patroness.

Mr. Sandbach appears to have had frequent feuds with his congregation. In 1772 he refused to allow any burials in the church or churchyard without his own special license and consent, charging the executors of Mr. Alderman Webster the sum of 10s. 6d. for the interment of the said Alderman. The Corporation, fearing at once an encroachment on their power, decreed that no burial should take place or monument be erected without "a lycense or faculty" from them or their successors. The following order concerning Sandbach appears under the date 12th April, 1776: "R. Sandbach, minister, having refused to visit sick people and privately to Baptise weak sickly infants, the Mayor and Justices for the time being are appointed a committee to manage, prosecute, and carry on a presentment against him in the Ecclesiastical Court." The town appears to have succeeded in this suit, for at the date, 1776, the following entry appears in the diary of the Rev. J. Wilson: "Great rejoicings over the defeat of Mr. Sandbach. The church bells rang *all night*."

In 1785 Mr. Sandbach resigned his living for the Rectory of St. Dunstan, Stepney.

1785–1831, Rev. Samuel Williamson.

The record of this gentleman is somewhat disconnected. His father, a Virginian gentleman of good estate, lost most of it as the result of loyalty to the crown during the American War, and the son was sent over to England to be educated for the

church. On his appointment to Congleton he at once became most popular, from his universal kindness and gentlemanly feeling, and he was elected Alderman and Mayor of the borough in 1799. The habits of conviviality too common in the period, though they exposed him to the censure, in his advanced age, of a scrupulous committee of the Corporation, by no means sufficed to destroy the balance of goodwill entertained for him by his people; as was shewn by the fact that while one page of the Corporate Minute Book contains a disparaging entry about him, the very next records the fact that the freemen (who then had the appointment) "in their common hall, on the morrow of St. Michael and all Angels," unanimously elected him once again, after thirteen years interval, Mayor of the borough. In Mr. Williamson's declining days he was fortunate in obtaining the valuable help, as curate, of the Rev. C. B. Hodges, next mentioned, who succeeded him on his death, and in 1838 retired to the small incumbency of Byley.

1832–38, Rev. Charles Bishop Hodges, M.A., of Queen's College, Oxford.

1838–42, Rev. Thomas B. Ingham, M.A., of Cambridge, formerly of Sandbach.

1842–72, Rev. John Hughes, B.A., of Trinity College, Dublin.

Mr. Hughes died 20th July, 1872, after an incumbency of thirty years, during which the formation of the four ecclesiastical districts took place. The long ministration of this very able and estimable clergyman was marked by peace and prosperity, and his death was the subject of universal lament.

1872–81, Rev. Richard Garland, LL.B., formerly of Warrington.

He died at the Vicarage, 25th September, 1881, at the age of sixty-two, and is buried in the adjoining cemetery. He was an active member of the School Board.

1882, Rev. Hubert Hunter Phelps, M.A., is the present Vicar.

Monuments.

THE monuments now in the church I have here arranged in chronological order. These are all mural, chiefly of white marble and granite, several being superior as works of art. Forming a portion of the present nave floor are the only tombstones formerly in the old church. These inscriptions, rapidly becoming illegible, are as follows:

Here lyeth | the body of Elizabeth | daughter of Richard and Elizabeth Jackson | who departed this | life the 13th day of June | 1699

Here also lyeth the | body of Richard Jack | son, Alderman, who | departed this life | Septembr | Anno Dom: 1714

Mary dau:
of IOHN BROOKE
of con:
gleton & widow of
Philip Smallwood
of
Over Peover, was here buryed
Septr. 24. 1712.

Here Lieth
the body of
JOHN LOCKETT,
who died Aug. 30th, 1733,
aged 73 years.

Between two windows in the south aisle is a curious old brass belonging to the former church. Over the inscription are the arms of the deceased: Quarterly, 1st and 4th, *arg.* a stork *sa.*, membered gules; *Starkey.* 2nd, three bends enhanced; 3rd, ———. Crest: a stork's head erased per pale *arg.* and *sa.*, holding in the beak gules, a snake *vert.*

In Memory
of JAMES STARKEY
Esqr of Darley who
departed this Life the
Ninth day of December in
the Seventy ninth year of his age
Anno domini 1728.

In well
Grounded Hopes
of a Blessed Resur-
rection to Life Eternal
the Mortal Remains of
KATHERINE Wife of James
Starkey Esqr were under-
neath deposited Janʸ 23
1718.

Another brass in the north aisle bears the following (almost illegible) inscription:

Near to this Place are Interr'd the Bodies of
four of the Children of JOHN and SUSANNA
SYDEBOTHAM of this Town, viz:
SUSANNA who dyed August the 31st, 1727.
ANN who dyed January the 16th, 1727.
PETER who dyed January the 25th, 1734.
JANE who dyed August the 9th, 1755.
And also JOHN KIRKBY, Druggist, their Son-
in-Law who dyed October the 6th, 1759.
MARY BAGNALL, their Grand Daughter
December 14, 1769.
The aforesaid JOHN SYDEBOTHAM, March 25th, 1773,
Aged 78.
SUSANNA, his Wife, March 10th, 1774,
Aged 77.
SUSANNA KIRKBY, Widow, died Oct. 17th, 1812,
Aged 81.

On a pillar on the south side of the nave is an old slab of marble, with the inscription:

Over against this pillar in the middle
Isle lyeth interred the Body
of JOHN SMITH Late Alderman
and twice Mayor of the
town, he gave the Chandelier
and was other Ways a
Benefactor to this Church,
he died on the 30 of January 1749
Aged 59.

On the opposite side is the handsome monument of the Alsagers of Alsager; a family once of much influence in the town. Recumbent stones of other members of the same are in the nave floor:

SACRED
To the Memory of ELIZABETH widow of
JOHN ALSAGER of Alsager, Gentleman,
who died March the 18th, 1750, in the 72nd year of her age;
Also of ANN their Daughter, who died Jan^{y} the 19th,
1743, in the 40th year of her Age;
Also of JOHN ALSAGER, esq. their Son
Who died Jan^{y} 22, 1768, in the 54th year of his age,
Also of JOHN & RALPH their Sons,
who died in their Infancy;
Also of their Daughters,
SARAH who died July 11, 1769, aged 61;
ELIZABETH April 4, 1783, 77;
MARGARET May 13, 1789, 72;
JUDITH Feb. 27, 1795, 75;
MARY Mar. 23, 1795, 82.

Also, at the north-east end of the church, by the Grammar School pew, is a large stone slab, inscribed:

In Memory of
RICHARD ALSAGER, Esq.,
One of the elder brethren of the Trinity House,
and representative of the eastern division of the county of Surrey,
who with self-denying zeal and uncompromising integrity,
at the sacrifice of health,
served his country in two successive Parliaments,
commanding the esteem and affection of his friends,
and the respect of his political opponents.
To the amiableness and generosity of his natural disposition,
his sincere and unostentatious piety imparted a grace and tenderness
which characterised the humble disciple of the Saviour whom he loved.
He peacefully entered into his eternal rest
on Sunday the 17th of January 1841, in the 60th year of his age.
His last words being
"Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory
through our Lord Jesus Christ."
His mortal remains are deposited in his family vault
in the parish church of Tooting, in the county of Surrey.

On the wall in the south aisle two neat marble tablets are lettered as follows: (See a further account of this family, page 147).

Here lyeth Interr'd
The Body of SAMUEL PATTISON, late of London, Merchant:
a Person of unspotted Integrity, of exemplary Virtue, and
Endow'd with every Amiable Quality that can Adorn Humane Nature.
Therefore, Universally Regretted by his Family and Friends!
He resided during a Year before his Death in this town
As DIRECTOR of the SILK MILLS: where, by his great Abilitys,
and Unwearied Application,
he render'd the most important services:
and Enjoy'd the Satisfaction of Living to See
all the Works Compleated, and the Manufacture
brought to perfection
Obiit 27 May, 1756, æt. 30.

Sacred to the Memory of HELEN wife of
NATHANIEL MAXEY PATTISON, of this borough, Esq.
who died the 6th day of November, 1818,
in the 55 year of her age.

Of thee blest saint bereft,
We Mourn to whom impoverished Life is left,
Mourn for ourselves! Secure thy lot must be
With those who pure in Heart their GOD shall see.

Also
To the Memory of NATHANIEL MAXEY PATTISON who died
the 13th day of August, 1827,
In the 67 year of his age.

A True Christian, Kind Father & Firm Friend.

Near which are two stones adjoining each other, thus inscribed:

THIS
TABLET IS
ERECTED BY THEIR NEPHEW
EDMUND WHITFIELD,
TO
THE MEMORY OF
ANN, BORN 1772,
DIED 23RD JULY, 1847,
ELLEN, BORN 1777,
DIED 31ST JANUARY, 1844,
DAUGHTERS OF
JOHN WHITFIELD.

In Memory of
JOHN WHITFIELD, of Moseley Hall, Esquire,
who died on the 11th of August, 1808.
Aged 65 Years.

"*He suffered much from God's afflicting rod,*
Taught first to know himself and then his GOD."

Also in Memory of ELLEN his surviving Widow,
who died on the 30th of November, 1813,
Aged 69 Years.
This Tablet was erected by their daughter Ellen
as a small tribute of her veneration and love.

Between two windows in the north aisle are two mural tablets in memory of Holland Watson, Esq. and his wife, with armorial shields carved at the foot of the former:

In a vault near this place
are interred the remains of HARRIOTT
Wife of HOLLAND WATSON, Esq.,
who died on the 16th day of March, 1819, aged 50 years.

This Monument is erected
by her greatly afflicted Husband
to perpetuate the memory
of one of the best of Wives.

Sacred
To the Memory of
HOLLAND WATSON, Esq.,[a]
a Magistrate
for the counties of Chester and Lancaster,
and late of this town,
who died 10th March, 1829,
in the 79th year of his age,
and was interred
in a vault in the church yard of St. Michael's,
Liverpool.

Arms: *Arg.* on a chevron engrailed *az.*, between three martlets *sa.* as many crescents *or*; Quartering, *Holland*, *az.*, semeé de lis a lion rampant *arg.*; and *Yates*, *az.*, a chevron between three gates *arg.*; and—, gules a lion rampant,—within a bordure engrailed *or*—, and—, gules a bend—.

Crest: A griffin's head erased *arg.*, charged with two chevronels gules, holding in the beak a cinquefoil *vert.*

In the same aisle, near the east end, a mural slab of marble, surmounted with a richly carved urn, bears this inscription:

Near to this Place
lie the Remains of
JOHN SIDEBOTHAM LOWNDES,
second Son of
William and Susanna Sidebotham Lowndes,
of Sandbach,
who died Nov. 23rd, 1819, aged 21 years.

On the north side of the chancel a plain marble slab, the only monument of the Wilbraham family contained in the church, is thus inscribed:

Sacred
to the Memory of
Catherine Relict of Roger Wilbraham,
late of Dorfold, in this County, Esq.
She departed this Life on the 29th July, 1824,
in the 86th year of her age.

[a] Holland Watson, nephew to the widow of the Stockport Antiquary and Historian, appears to have settled here *circa* commencement of the present century. He was made freeman of Congleton 19 Sept., 1808, and Deputy Mayor, 1820. He removed from Congleton to Liverpool shortly after his wife Margaret's death, where he died ten years after, and was buried at St. Michael's, Liverpool.

The handsome marble tablet of John Adney Bostock is the first in the north aisle. At the head, richly carved, are the armorial bearings: *Sa.* a fesse hummetté *arg.*; Quartering, two bars charged with six crosses, crosslet, and two lions passant. Crest: on the stump of a tree eradicated *arg.*, a bear's head erased *sa.*, muzzled *or*.

In Memory of
JOHN ADNEY BOSTOCK,
of Congleton,
Who died April 15th, 1862, aged 65.
He was descended from an ancient and
honourable family of this borough,
who filled important offices
in the Corporation, and were
benefactors to this Church.

This tablet, erected by Alice Morris as a tribute of respect to the memory of the above, also records the names of William and Priscilla, his father and mother; and his sister, Priscilla Aubyn Bostock.

A plain stone, against the south wall by the west entrance, to the memory of James Staton, aged 89, 50 years parish clerk, who died May 21st, 1831, bears the following epitaph:

Mortals prepare, Rouse all your Active powers
Death, Judgement, Heaven, and Hell are near at hand.
Repent, Believe, Obey, your precious hours improve,
And Yours is Canaan's Glorious Land.

On the opposite wall a similar stone records the name of Charles Henry Cobbe, born Jan. 26, 1791, died May 17, 1867. He was for forty-three years parish clerk and sexton; which offices, his epitaph proclaims, "he filled with ability, zeal, and integrity."[b]

On a pillar in the north aisle, a tablet records the following:

In a Vault underneath
are deposited the mortal remains of
SARAH,
Wife of John Johnson, Esq., of Mortlake House,
who died the 20th of May, 1832, in the 63rd year of her age.

[b] His son, Thomas Charles Cobbe, succeeded him, and is the present sexton.

Opposite this, on a pillar, another tablet records:

In Memory of
SOPHIA,
the beloved Wife
of Joseph Bulkeley Johnson, Esq.,
of London;
who departed this life 11th April, 1835,
in the thirty-fifth year of her age:
and was underneath interred.

The two companion monuments on the south-west and north-west walls, belonging to the Reade family, are very richly carved, and are inscribed:

In Affectionate Remembrance of
GEORGE READE,
a Magistrate,
and thrice Mayor
of this borough,
Who died May 9, 1838,
Aged Seventy-eight years.
And of FRANCES,
his wife,
Who died Feb. 13, 1833,
Aged Sixty-three years.
"They rest in peace."

In Affectionate Remembrance of
CHARLES
WILLIAM READE,
Born 26 April, 1801,
Died 15 December, 1874.
And of his beloved wife
ELEANOR,
Born 13 November, 1801,
Died 13 March, 1867.
Their mortal remains
repose in the church yard
of Saint George's, Everton.
"Thy will be done."

The handsomest monument in the church is on the south-east wall, commemorating the name of Sir Thomas Reade, K.C.B. The monument, which is formed of white statuary marble, is surmounted with a civic crown, flags, and swords, emblematic of much military service. The figure of an African kneeling beneath a date tree is represented on the left side of the following inscription:

In Memory of
Colonel Sir THOMAS READE, Knight C.B., and a Knight of the
Sicilian Order of Saint Ferdinand and of Merit.
A native of this town,
who for 51 years served his country
in many different parts of the world;
and especially on the coast of Sicily,
where in command of a flotilla of gunboats
he repelled the aggressions of the French and Neapolitans.
Subsequently he was deputy Adjutant General
of the troops of St Helena
during the captivity there of Napoleon Buonaparte.
In later life
Sir Thomas Reade sustained the character of
Agent and Consul General
of the British Government at Tunis,
and acquiring the entire confidence of the Bey.
induced him to abolish slavery
throughout his dominions.
He died on the 29th day of July, 1849.
In Christian faith and in charity with all men,
and was buried in the Cemetery at Tunis
amidst the deep regrets of a multitude
lamenting him
as an honourable, kind, and faithful friend.

On a pillar at the south-east end of the church is a plain marble monument:

Sacred
to the memory of
ELIZABETH ANN COMBERBACH,
Who died Feb. 6, 1843,
Aged 76.
Also of
ALICE COMBERBACH,
Who died March 25, 1850,
Aged 82.

On a pillar at the east end, fronting the north aisle, is a plain tablet:

Sacred
To the Memory of
THOMAS CHADDOCK, Esq.,
Who died April 3rd, 1855,
Aged 84 Years.
Also in Memory of
WILLIAM CHADDOCK, his Son,
Who died February 13th, 1850,
Aged 48 Years.
"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

Another, on a middle pillar on the south side of the nave, lettered in gold:

SACRED
TO THE MEMORY OF
EDWARD DRAKEFORD,
OF CONGLETON,
DIED DECEMBER 15TH, 1859,
AGED 81 YEARS.
ALSO SARAH, WIFE OF THE ABOVE,
DIED JUNE 3RD, 1855,
AGED 70 YEARS.
ALSO MARTHA SARAH,
THEIR DAUGHTER,
DIED JANUARY 16TH, 1846,
AGED 25 YEARS.
ALSO WILLIAM, THEIR SON,
DIED FEBRUARY 12TH, 1849,
AGED 29 YEARS.

On another pillar in the same row, and overlooking the Corporation Pew,[c] an elegantly carved marble monument is inscribed:

In Memory of
ANNE BARRINGTON REDDALL,
of Parnelscroft, Congleton,
Widow of William Reddall,
and only Daughter of
William Lowndes, Esq.,
of Sandbach.
She fell asleep April 11th, 1871,
Aged 76 years.

Below this is the handsome brass in memory of the daughter of the above:

✠

In loving Memory of
SUSANNAH KIRKBY REDDALL, of Parnelscroft, Congleton,
Only child of William and Anne Barrington Reddall,
Born October 4th, 1819, Died April 9th, 1877.

"Them which sleep in Jesus
will God bring with Him."
I.H.S.

On the north-west wall a large marble tablet mounted on a polished slab, is:

[c] By the same pillar, well carved and painted in gold, is a crowned lion rampant, on a tun, representing the arms of Congleton.

To the Memory
of RALPH SUTTON, Esquire,
Magistrate of this Borough,
Who died on the 20th of July, 1857,
Aged 79 years.

The same tablet bears the name of Elizabeth, relict of the above, who died Aug. 9th, 1860, aged 86. On the south-west wall on a mural monument:

Sacred to the Memory of
ISAAC FAULKNER,[d]
For many years an eminent
Surgeon of this town.
He died 7th January, 1856,
Aged 87 years.

Also the name of John Faulkner, his nephew, who died 2nd December, 1873, aged 72 years, is recorded on the same stone.

On the south-east wall, a very handsome marble monument bears the following inscription:

Sacred to the Memory of
JOHN HALL, Surgeon,
Magistrate and formerly Alderman of this Borough;
Son of the Rev. Samuel Hall,
of Manchester.
Died November 27th, 1861, æt. 76.
And of ANNE, his wife,
Daughter of Richard Martin,
of Congleton, Gentleman,
Died December 8th, 1861, æt. 68.
"The most unselfish of parents."

Facing the vicarage pew, attached to a pillar on the north side of the nave, is a plain white slab to the memory of the Rev. John Hughes, Vicar.[e]

✠

In Memory of
Rev. JOHN HUGHES, B.A.,
Four years Curate
And thirty years Incumbent
of this Church.
Born January 30th, 1812,
Died July 20th, 1872.

[d] Elizabeth, relict of Ralph Sutton, was his sister.

[e] A handsome tombstone was erected over his remains in the modern burial ground by his parishioners and friends. See page 141.

Churchyard and Cemetery.

THE Churchyard is strewn with flat and raised tombstones, the latter being mostly of the present century. Not until 1686 were the inhabitants permitted to bury their dead in Congleton; Astbury being previously to that time the only place for interments. In that year, the see of Chester and the archbishopric of York being both vacant, the inhabitants petitioned the Dean of York as follows:

> To y^e^ R^t^ Worp^ll^ D^r^ Tobias Wickham Dean of y^e^ Cathedrale Church of Yorke & y^e^ Chapter of y^e^ same Church now guardians of y^e^ spiritualities belonging to y^e^ Archie'pall see of Yorke.

The humble peticon of y^e^ Mayor Aldermen & Burgesses of y^e^ ancient Burrough of Congleton w^th^in y^e^ parish of Astbury in y^e^ County of Chester.

That we having an ancient Chappell of Ease w^th^in y^e^ said Burrough, for y^e^ inhabitants thereof & a setled revenue for y^e^ Minister of o^r^ s^d^ Burrough & y^e^ blessed sacram^ts^ there usually administred but having no legall authority to bury in y^e^ s^d^ Chappell & Chappell yard (though a very suitable soyle for y^t^ purpose) are forced to earry o^r^ dead corpses to y^e^ parish of Astbury, A mile distant from our s^d^ town & so thronged w^th^ graves, That severall green graves are often foreed inconveniently & undecently to be broken up, And we being very populous & having abundance of poor among us, who are usually buried at y^e^ townes Charge doe humbly desire that yo^r^ wors'pp upon due consideration of y^e^ prmisses will please to grant us a Lycense for makeing o^r^ s^d^ Chappell & Chappell yard a burial place; and yo^r^ humble petieon^rs^ shall ever pray.

THOMAS MALBONE, Mayor.

JON. WALKER, THO. SPENCER, } Justiees.

WM. NEWTON, RBT. HOBSON, PETER LINGARD, JON. SMITH, ROBT. KNIGHT, THO. WOOLRICH, } Aldermen.

JON. BOURNE.
JON. MORETON.
JON. WHITAKER.
WM. SIMCOCK.
RALPH DEANE.
THO. COTTON.
JON. SHAW.
ROGER SPENCER.

Jon. Brooke.	Jon. Markland.
Jon. Rathbone.	Richd. Jackson.
Roger Fletcher.	Jon. Drakeford.
Jon. Keene.	Wm. Muskett.
Jon. Vardon.	

This petition was granted; and thus is accounted for the fact of there being no gravestones in St. Peter's churchyard of anterior date to 1688. In 1841 the churchyard, from alleged over-crowding, was ordered by the Privy Council to be closed, and a cemetery, one acre in extent, was added to it from the adjoining land of the Cockshutes.

Ringing the Chains.

THE custom of Ringing the Chains or Fetters in the early morning of St. Peter's Day, now entirely obsolete, was intended to represent the shaking or clanging of the fetters which bound the Apostle.

Hundreds of years ago, when the only recognised Feast Day of St. Peter was on the 29th of June, these bells or chains were invented. Prior to the Reformation the Calendar was enlarged, and a second day set apart for commemorating Peter's imprisonment by Herod, namely, the 1st of August, or Lammas Day, which became known in the Catholic Calendar as the Feast of "St. Peter *ad Vincula*," or "St. Peter in the Fetters." Consequently the Congleton "Wake," or, more properly, the Feast of the Dedication, commenced on that day, and so continued till 1752, when, in order to bring the seasons again to their old order a change of style was made, and the Calendar put back twelve days. Thus it happens that the "Wake" festival commences on the first Sunday after the 12th of August, on which day these chains were used.

The figure in the accompanying sketch has slung across his shoulder a perfect fac-simile of their representation. The set consists of three belts, each with different toned bells. From the "Cheshire Sheaf"[a] I have taken the following description of this quaint old custom, contributed by Mr. Wilson:

[a] Vol. ii., page 378.

"A custom in ancient days obtained of sending round the town at midnight of the Vigil of the 12th of August three acolytes or servers, each carrying sash-ways or leathern belts studded with spherical bells with rolling bullet clappers. These minor ministers danced about in all the public places, producing a horrid clangor of noise, effectual enough for 'wake' purposes; and having presumably thus sufficiently aroused the faithful, the chief officer proclaimed at the Market Cross the holding of St. Peter's wake, and exhorted all good people to keep it religiously. It is curious that this bell ringing was always called down to my time, as mentioned below, the ringing of "the chains"; and it seems not unreasonable to suppose that the round bells studding the belts were meant to represent the '*lacunæ*' in the '*vincula*' of St. Peter. At the Reformation, when many good things happened, this bad one supervened on the old observance; that the authorities in Church or (local) State, or both, to shew their contempt for ancient religious forms, handed over the three belts of chains to a family of chimney sweepers,[b] who, as their predecessors had done, perambulated the town on the midnight of the wake vigil, but published at the Market Cross a profane travesty of the old proclamation, ending with an exhortation to drink as much good strong ale as possible during the wake festival. These sweeps, like other dignitaries, were hereditary, and it happened that for near three hundred years the bells or chains were handed down from sire to son, and the bell ringing nuisance continued to within the last twenty years, ending as usual with the scandalous proclamation. Fortunately the line of succession to the right to the degraded bells became duplex. Fights and rows occurred among the claimants until, when both the belligerents had been safely esconced in the lockups, as well for their mutual protection as that of the public, they sent for me as the Town Clerk; and, in consideration of the sum of ten shillings to each litigant, made over to me all their rival claims, rights, titles and interests in the ancient Chains of Peter. I got the ancient leathers with their venerable iron buckles cleaned and renovated, and several missing bells replaced by modern facsimiles; and they are now preserved among our archives."

Whether among the chronicles of any other town or village there exist traces of any thing identical with this old Congleton custom it has never been ascertained.

[b] Family of Stubbs.

RINGING THE CHAINS.
From a Drawing by MISS EMILY CAMPBELL HILL.

Rushbearing.

THE ancient custom of bearing Rushes, which existed here till about the middle of the seventeenth century, usually took place on some great Feast Day. The morning was ushered in by the ringing of bells, rousing the inhabitants at an early hour to prepare for the reception of those bringing Rushes to the church. A few gleanings from the old records shew us that more than two hundred years ago these people, mostly young men and women, gaily attired, came in procession, bearing rushes and garlands of flowers. The rushes were strewn over the floors of the principal seats for the comfort and warmth of the worshippers, and the garlands used to decorate the church. This was attended with much psalm-singing and hymns, after which sports and dances were indulged in, accompanied with the usual consumption of wine and cake. The sum of money usually spent on this refection was 3s. 4d. The following are a few records of a Congleton Rushbearing:

1592	Item spent at the Rushbearynge from Buglawton	0	3	4
1598	payd that was bestowed in wyne upon those that brought Rushes to the Chapple out of Buglawton[a]	0	3	4
1621	paid to Marie Spencer for charges bestow'd uppon Lawton folke who brought rushes and flowers to the Chappell	0	3	4
1627	Paid for a piper & musitioner who played before the Rushbearinge			

[a] Doubtless amongst the marshy valleys intersecting the district of Buglawton at that time where runs the stream "Dane in schow," (Daneinshaw) these rushes would grow in much profusion. Hence it is that in most cases the bearings were by "Lawton folke."

St. John's Church, Buglawton.

ALTHOUGH the township (now parish) of Buglawton is outside the limits of Congleton borough, their boundaries are interminous, and for two reasons a historical and descriptive account of its church, dedicated to St. John the Evangelist, is here introduced.[a] In the first place, the erection of Buglawton church was the first in date completed during that remarkable decade from 1840 to 1850, which saw the successful efforts of local churchmen to provide the old parish of Astbury with no fewer than six consecrated houses of prayer; sorely wanted and desired in vain for many previous ages; and, secondly, because the accomplishment of the work at Buglawton was the direct introduction of the successive schemes of church building which one by one arose to adorn and benefit the borough and the old parish. The main originator of the whole was the Rev. Edward Wilson, then, and for thirty previous years, Master of the Grammar School, Congleton, aided by the generous encouragement, pecuniary and otherwise, of the gentry and leading manufacturers of the neighbourhood; and of sundry good men who, prosperous elsewhere, had not forgotten the claims and welfare of their native town. The cordial concurrence of the church authorities at Astbury in all that was done was also a gratifying harbinger and accompaniment of its success. When Buglawton church was built, it must be acknowledged that the revival of ecclesiastical architecture was but in its infancy; the first object being at as little cost as possible to provide a decent place of worship, and to that end to make comparatively limited resources go as far as possible. The custom of making churches point from west to east was

[a] For useful information in describing these churches I am indebted to the Rev. W. Besant, Rev. G. A. E. Kempson, Rev. J. M. Bannerman, Rev. W. E. E. M. Bull, and especially to Mr. John Wilson.

St. John's Church, Buglawton.

also, if not disregarded at Buglawton, overruled to suit the convenience of access from the high road to the main entrance under the tower; and the point is as nearly as possible from south to north.

The plot of land (about an acre) on which the church was built was the gift, as it was part of the estate, of Mr. Thomas Chapman, of the Lowe. The church is situated on a rather commanding knoll, opposite to Bank House,[b] and its total cost was about £2286, raised by voluntary subscriptions, aided by grants from the Church Building Societies. The church was consecrated by Bishop Sumner on October 10th, 1840; and as an instance of the unsettled condition of the then ill-informed minds of a part of the operative class in Congleton and Buglawton the strange exhibition was made that the municipal procession of the Mayor and Corporation of Congleton, attending to escort the bishop to the consecration, was preceded by a motley gathering of Chartists and Socialists, carrying a black flag, painted over with death's head and cross bones, and other minatory and offensive devices. The Rev. Edward Wilson, who had accepted the uninviting charge of this rude population in exchange for his chaplainship for twenty years at Odd Rode, merely remarked in allusion to this outrage that, it was a proof that a church was required, and might probably be useful in Buglawton. And his saying was justified, when, nineteen years afterwards, almost the whole population, once so rough, turned out in respectful sympathy to attend the good man to his grave.

The CHURCH is a building of one span, and has a panelled roof. The sole entrance is at the southerly end, under the clock tower, which is crowned by a short spire and furnished with a well-toned single bell. There is a small chancel containing a stained glass window of two lights, representing the "Descent from the Cross," and the "Entombment." The vestry opens from the chancel to the left. On each side of the chancel arch are the pulpit and prayer desk with lectern in the centre. The stone font is, as customary, near the entrance. A blemish to the general lightsome character of the church is a square and unsightly gallery, raised on light iron pillars over the main entrance, for the purpose of containing a small organ and choir seats. This addition was made in 1860, and was perhaps

[b] The residence and property of Mr. Anthony Shaw.

necessary to prevent undue limiting of the accommodation; the church seating in its oaken pews and benches not more than 400 worshippers. An original but unavoidable drawback to the regularity of the church is, that there is no central aisle; the chancel being approached by two side alleys, each between rows of pews. There are several neat and some costly monumental tablets on the walls.[c] The churchyard also contains several beautiful and stately memorial tombstones. The National Day and Sunday Schools open into the churchyard on its easterly side. They form a neat edifice of Cloudside stone, and adjoining them is the schoolmaster's house of the same material. The parsonage was a purchase from the late Mr. John Johnson, and is a commodious three-storied house, of brick with stone porch, and surrounded by a large garden and croft; altogether about four acres. The first incumbent, aided very bountifully as above mentioned, and notably by Mr. Henry Hogg and Mr. Charles Vandrey, succeeded in making these last essential additions to the church establishment for Buglawton.

The Rev. Edward Wilson died in 1858, and was succeeded by the

Rev. Henry Rowland Bramwell, M.A., of Christ College, Cambridge, who, on his decease in 1868, was succeeded by the present Vicar, the

Rev. William Besant, M.A., of Hertford College, Oxford, sometime Curate of Astbury, and at that time in charge of the local district of Hulme Walfield.[d] The benefice is in the gift of the Rector of Astbury for the time being, by virtue of the small original endowment (about £120 per annum) being granted by the Rev. Willoughby Crewe, when Rector in 1840. By the munificence of the Rev. Edward Clayton, the tithes of the township of Buglawton were alienated from Astbury, and settled on the Vicar of St. John's, since which period the gross annual value of the living is returned at £374.

The Registers commence in 1840.

[c] To the memory of members of the following families: Johnson, Pearson, Hogg, and to the Rev. H. R. Bramwell and Rev. E. Wilson, Ministers.

[d] The present Vicar of Hulme Walfield is the Rev. Charles Edward Sullivan, M.A.

St. James's Church.

THIS, the second in order of consecration of the churches built on the Congleton side of the old Parish of Astbury, shews a decided improvement in architectural taste. Many helpers and workers among the clergy and gentry of the district, aided by liberal grants from the diocesan societies, accomplished the work of providing this commodious place of worship for the recently formed district (now parish) of St. James's, at a cost of a little over £4000. The parish itself occupies the whole western portion of Congleton to the Astbury boundary, with a population of nearly four thousand souls.

The CHURCH stands on a commanding site on land given by the late Mr. Lowndes Malabar, at the angle of West Street and Astbury Street. The first stone was laid 29 May, 1847, by Mr. Randle Wilbraham, High Steward of Congleton, and the building was consecrated by Dr. Graham, Bishop of Chester, 24 January, 1849. Its style of architecture is that of the transitional period of Early English, the characteristics of which were well observed; from the steep roof (forming an equilateral triangle) to the doorways and windows. The following is a copy of the scroll placed under the chief stone in the north-east corner of the chancel:

In memorial of the founding of a Church in the district of St. James', Congleton, heretofore part of the extensive parish of Astbury, in the County of Chester. This District contains a population of 3400, and was the first instituted by Her Majesty's Commissioners under the powers of the 6 and 7 Vic. cap. xxxvii., entitled, "An Act to make better provision for the spiritual care of populous parishes," commonly known as Sir Robert Peel's Church Extension Act. On Saturday, 29 May, 1847, and 187th Anniversary of the Restoration, and the 10th year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Victoria. This record was deposited in the north-east corner stone of the chancel of the said Church, which was laid at the request of the

Committee, by Randle Wilbraham, Esq., of Rode Hall, High Steward of the Borough of Congleton, as the first stone and foundation of a Church, dedicated by the name of St. James, to the worship of Almighty God.

COMMITTEE.

Rev. Willoughby Crewe.	Thomas Chaddock, Esq.
Rev. John Hughes.	William Chaddock, Esq.
Rev. Edward Wilson.	Edwd. Lowndes Malabar, Esq.
Rev. James Brierley.	Samuel Pearson, Esq.
Rev. William Bewsher.	George Reade, Esq.
Randle Wilbraham, Esq.	James Pearson, Esq.
Randle Wilbraham, Jun.	Mr. William Bull.
Gibbs Crawfurd Antrobus, Esq.	Mr. Samuel Bull.
James Bateman, Esq.	Mr. John Wilson.

The Rev. Jonathan Wilson, Minister.
C. & J. Trubshaw, Architects.
Samuel Faram, Builder.

The exterior of the church is constructed of Cloud-side grit-stone, of a pleasant warm hue, and highly durable character. The roof is covered with Westmoreland pale-green slate. A tower foundation exists at the western end, measuring the whole width of the nave, with buttresses projecting from the angles five feet each way; and should ever the intention of the architect be carried out by the addition of a tower and spire of 160 feet in height, the external beauty of the edifice would be greatly enhanced.

The church consists of nave, side aisles, and chancel, with a porch at the north entrance, and a bell-cot surmounting the western end of the nave roof.

The interior is a fair specimen of its style. The Nave, which is 77 feet long, by 27 feet 6 inches wide, is separated from the side aisles by five pointed arches on each side, supported by six pillars formed of white Hollington stone, with moulded bases and capitals, the latter relieved by the alternate introduction of slight foliage. The clerestory windows are simple trefoils set in arch mouldings. The lofty roof, like the stalls, is composed of stained pinewood; the timbers, shaped with hammer beams and carved braces, are supported on stone corbels from the inner walls.

The Pulpit, standing in the north-east part of the nave, is of Belgian construction, and said to be of about the date of

St. James's Church.

1600.[a] It is hexagon in shape, and built of finely carved oak. A side panel contains the figure of the Saviour holding a chalice, and on the four front angles are emblems of the Evangelists. The Lectern, on the south side of the nave, is of brass, representing an eagle with outstretched wings and uplifted head.

The Chancel, paved with encaustic tiles, measures 30 feet long, 17 feet wide, and 35 feet in height, and is divided from the Nave by a lofty Chancel arch with clustered columns formed of Hollington stone. The east window is a triple lancet filled with stained glass,[b] illustrating the chief events in the Saviour's life. It was raised by voluntary subscription from the working people of the parish. Single lancet windows light either side of the Chancel. The Vestry is on the south, and the priest's door on

[a] It was brought to England by a private gentleman, at the sale of whose effects it was purchased for St. James's Church, then in course of erection.

[b] By Wailes, of Newcastle-on-Tyne.

the north side. Illuminations of the Ten Commandments are placed on the east wall.

The windows in the north and south aisles are of two lights each, with foliated geometrical tracery, having trefoils and quatrefoils alternate. A stained glass window on the east wall of the south aisle has its two lights dedicated, one, "To the Pious Memory of THOMAS CHADDOCK, who died 3rd April, 1855;" the other, "Sacred to the Memory of WILLIAM CHADDOCK, who died 13th February, 1850." A window at the east end of the north aisle is filled with stained glass, and bears the inscription, "Sacred to the Memory of SELINA ANNE PEARSON, of West House, Congleton, who died August 7th, 1861, aged 16 years." Another beautiful memorial window in the same aisle is to the memory of the father of the above, and inscribed, "To the glory of God and in loving memory of JAMES PEARSON, of West House, who died July 1st, 1881, aged 70 years." In the Chancel is a mural slab of marble to the memory of SARAH, wife of WILLIAM BINLEY DICKINSON, and mother of the late REV. JONATHAN WILSON.

The Parochial Registers for births and marriages only, there being no interments, commence in 1842.

The presentation to the Vicarage of St. James's is vested in the Bishop of Chester and the Crown alternately. The first Incumbent of the district, before the erection of the church, was the REV. CANON THOMAS GREEN, who was followed by the

REV. GUSTAVUS BARTON. He was succeeded on his decease, in 1846, by the

REV. JONATHAN WILSON, M.A., of Catherine Hall, Cambridge, who was presented by the Crown from his first curacy at Bollington. He was grandson of the Rev. Jonathan Wilson, Vicar of Biddulph, and Master of the Congleton Grammar School from 1776 to 1810. Mr. Wilson's earliest effort, after his appointment, was to substitute a more becoming place of worship for his parishioners than the schoolroom in Astbury Street, which at that time had to serve the double purpose of school and mission room; and, accordingly, with the assistance already referred to, the present commodious church was erected. During his twenty-three years' Incumbency he was also instrumental in providing the vicarage house, on West Heath, and the commodious Boys' Schools in North Street; the latter being an offshoot from the primary (now girls') school

in Astbury Street. On Mr. Wilson's presentation to the Rectory of Long Newton, Durham, in 1869, (where he died in 1885) he was succeeded by the

Rev. Frank Edward Hopwood, M.A., of Christ Church College, Oxford, son of the Rector of Winwick, co. Lancaster, and nephew of the late Earl of Derby. In 1879, Mr. Hopwood was presented by the present Earl to the Rectory of Badsworth, near Pontefract, and was succeeded at Congleton by the

Rev. George Arthur Edwin Kempson, M.A., of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, the present vicar.

The income of this important benefice is derived entirely from the funds of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. It was only £150 per annum, until augmented by the Commissioners in 1870 to £295, in consequence of the considerable increase of the population of the parish.

St. Stephen's Church.

THE parish of St. Stephen's was formed like St. James's under the provisions of the "Church Extension Act," and contains a population of 3070 souls. The small endowment of £150 (recently increased to £176) per annum is also derived from the Church funds under the control of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. As in the case of the other parishes its operations were commenced several years before the church was built, the large brick building, (now the boys' and girls' schools) in Spragg Street, being used for divine service.[a] The following is extracted from the prospectus dated March, 1858:

It has been more than once attempted, during the last twelve years, to build a Church in the thickly populated District of St. Stephen, Congleton, but until now the work has not been carried out, in consequence of many difficulties of various kinds which militated against it.

At length, however, the Committee have succeeded in obtaining a beautiful site for the proposed Church and Parsonage, at a cost of £575: and, by God's blessing, it is fervently hoped that shortly the work of building the Church may be commenced, and carried successfully forward to its completion.

For several years past Divine Service has been celebrated in a Licensed School Room, and the Congregation is larger than might be expected, when it is considered that the School is in a back Street, and that the accommodation for worshippers is inferior and unsatisfactory.

The number of persons who communicate (at least three times in the year) is about Fifty; thus there is at present a nucleus for a good Congregation in a New Church.

The population of the District, amounting to between three and four thousand, is composed almost entirely of poor working people.

[a] This commodious, though unsightly building, was used by a body of religionists of a somewhat ephemeral enthusiasm before it was purchased for church use.

The urgency of the case has been liberally acknowledged by the "Incorporated Society for Building Churches," by the "Chester Diocesan Church Building Society," and by "Her Majesty's Church Building Commissioners;" the first named having made a grant of £280, the second a grant of £200, and the third a grant of £150.

The Plans (which have been approved of by the Societies) are from the designs of JOSEPH CLARKE, ESQ., F.S.A., of London.

The situation of the Church is on the high road from Congleton to Buglawton, on a site overlooking on its northern side the verdant meadows of the Park, fringed by the Town Wood, with the river *Dane* flowing close to the slopes of its graveyard.

The CHURCH itself is formed in the popular transition style of architecture which came in before the end of the fourteenth century, and is not unfrequently termed "Third Pointed" Style. It contains a nave, chancel, and north and south aisles, with a porch over the south entrance, and a bell gable on the east end of the nave roof.

The beauty of its interior is widely recognised, the proportional arrangements and ornamentation being executed in the stateliest character of ecclesiology and architectural taste. Near the south entrance is a brass plate inscribed as follows:

This Church was consecrated
by the
Lord Bishop of Chester
On Wednesday, the 5th day of September,
A.D. 1860,
Having been BUILT by PUBLIC subscription
Aided by GRANTS of
£150 from HER MAJESTY'S Church Building
COMMISSIONERS,
£380 from the INCORPORATED SOCIETY for
Building Churches, &c., and
£300 from the Chester Diocesan
Church Building Society
For the free use of the Inhabitants of this Parish.

Joseph Oakden, L. Th., First Incumbent.

William Warrington, } Wardens.
John Cook Chapman, }

Joseph Clarke, F.S.A., London, Architect.

Samuel Faram, Odd Rode, Builder.

St. Stephen's Church.

From the west door the symmetrical proportions of the interior are best seen. A succession of graceful pillars with floriated capitals, formed of clear Bath stone, extends down both sides of the nave, supporting five pointed arches composed of Alton and Forest sandstone alternately introduced. The roof of the nave is lofty and built in panels of stained pine with the main timbers exposed. The stalls are also formed of the same wood, which is said to be as durable as the best oak. The clerestory windows, five on each side, are quatrefoils filled with various shades of tinted glass. The oak Pulpit, hexagon in shape, stands against the north pillar nearest the chancel; and the Font, composed of Caen stone, is in the transept near the south door.

The Chancel, formed with an apsidal termination and a small chapel on either side, is separated from the nave by a lofty pointed arch of Bath stone with the central column of marble, and ball-flower ornamentation in stone continued through the upper portion. The two side chapels are separated

from the choir by a single wide-sprung arch supported on ornamental corbels, beneath which are slender screens of metal tracery. The north chapel serves as a vestry, the roof of which like that of the other side is of rich blue ground studded with gilded stars, and with the words "Let thy Priests be clothed with righteousness," inscribed thereon. A small triangular-shaped fresco painting of the proto-martyr Stephen is inserted in the wall above the fire-place. The south chapel contains the organ, and inscribed over the roof are the words "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace good will towards men." The choir stalls, prayer and reading desks, are all of oak. The roof is more elaborate than that of the nave, having floral decorations and the first two verses of the *Te Deum* painted round the angles. In the spacious sedilia on the south side, on a small brass is the following inscription: "This Chancel was built and decorated to the glory and honour of Almighty God by means of a special fund contributed by many friends and former pupils to raise a monument to the blessed memory of the Reverend Edward Wilson, Head Master of the Free Grammar School of this Borough from 1810 to 1844; and for the last 18 years of his life Incumbent of the Parish of Buglawton. He rested from his labours on the 4th day of July, 1858, aged 71 years."[b]

The three windows in the apse at the east end, each of two lights, are filled with stained glass,[c] and are in special commemoration of the above. One represents Jacob blessing the children of Joseph with the words "I have waited for Thy salvation O Lord"; and Joshua addressing the Tribes before his death, with the words "Take good heed therefore unto yourselves that ye love the Lord your God." In another are represented Job and Daniel, with the inscription under the former, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and under the latter, "They that be wise shall shine." In the left light of the middle window is the aged Simeon with the Infant Jesus, and the words "Lord now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace," and in the opposite light, the martyrdom of St. Stephen with the words "Behold I see the heavens opened."

The north and south aisles are lighted by narrow windows of one light each, those on the south side are filled with various

[b] See Grammar School.

[c] By Messrs. Edmondson & Son, Manchester.

shades of tinted glass. Over the west door are two long narrow windows of one light each filled with stained glass and bearing the following inscription: "Erected by the Teachers and Scholars of the Parish Sunday Schools and other friends in Memory of the late William Warrington, Esq."

A pleasant vicarage residence is within easy distance of the church. The Parochial Registers commence in 1860.

The presentation to the Vicarage of St. Stephen's is in the hands of the Crown and the Bishop of the Diocese alternately. Before the church was built the

Rev. Adolphus Robert Vaughan Hamilton, M.A., of Cambridge, was in charge of the district. He was followed in 1844 by the

Rev. John Scott, M.A., of Trinity College, Cambridge, who remained until 1852. He was followed by the

Rev. Joseph Oakden, L. Th. of Durham University. During Mr. Oakden's incumbency the church was erected. He resigned in 1872 in exchange with the

Rev. George Edward Hignett, M.A., of Oxford, and at that time Vicar of St. John's, Walthamstow, Essex. On Mr. Hignett's presentation by Lord Delamere to the vicarage of Whitegate in 1873,[d] the

Rev. James Macleod Bannerman, M.A., of Trinity College, Dublin, and at that time Vicar of Aigburth, Liverpool, succeeded to St. Stephen's, and is the present Vicar.[e]

[d] Now Vicar of St. Peter's, Blackburn, co. Lancaster.

[e] And Chaplain to the 5th Cheshire Rifle Volunteers.

Mossley Church.

MOSSLEY Church, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, is situated amidst one of the pleasantest localities round Congleton, about a mile beyond the Station, on the Biddulph road. The district (now parish) which is a scattered one, was formed some forty years ago, and contains a population of over 900 souls.

The CHURCH, erected in 1844, on a site of land given by the late Mr. James Brierley,[a] of Mossley Hall, is a neat building of modern Early English character; and contains a nave and chancel, a vestry on the south side, and a bell-gable on the west end of the nave roof. The following scroll was deposited beneath the chief stone:

Glory be to the Father, & to the Son, & to the Holy Ghost.
TRINITY CHURCH, MOSSLEY.
The Corner Stone of this Church, Dedicated to the Worship of Almighty God. was Laid by Randle Wilbraham, Esq., of Rode Hall, in the County of Chester, High Steward of the Borough of Congleton, on the Eighteenth day of June, in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty Four, and in the Seventh year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lady Victoria.

WILLOUGHBY CREWE, B.D., Rector of Astbury.
WILLIAM BEWSHER, A.B., Curate of Astbury.
JOHN HUGHES. A.B., Incumbent of Congleton.
JOHN SCOTT, A.B., Curate of Congleton.
EDWARD WILSON, Incumbent of Buglawton.
WILLIAM S. READE, SAMUEL BULL, } Wardens of Congleton.
JAMES BROADHURST, Esq., Mayor of Congleton.
J. & C. TRUBSHAW, Architects, Newcastle-under-Lyme.

[a] Who also gave £500 towards the erection of the Church, and a similar amount for providing the excellent vicarage house.

The porch over the principal entrance was erected in 1859. There is also a porch on the north side leading to a small gallery at the west end of the church. The nave is lighted on the south side by four windows of two lights each, and on the north by three windows of a like character, and one single lancet. The stone PULPIT, tastefully carved, of hexagonal shape, on a round pedestal, and the LECTERN, stand on the north side near the chancel. The stone FONT is near the western entrance. The organ, placed there in 1883, is on the south side. The arches of the roof are supported on plain corbels of stone projecting from the inner walls, and nearly parallel with the heads of the windows.

The CHANCEL is separated from the nave by an appropriate arch, and is lighted by a centre window of three lights of plain glass, and two windows of single lights on each side. Against the east wall the Ten Commandments are painted in neat suitable character.

The Registers commence in 1845. The commodious Day and Sunday Schools, situated a little distance from the church, possess the endowments of £13 12s. 2d. per annum from money invested in the Funds under the designation of "Brierley's Charity," and £3 4s. 10d. per annum under the will of the late Mrs. A. Hall, of Dane-in-shaw.

The presentation to the Vicarage of Mossley Church is in the hands of the Rector of Astbury. Its net value is £174 per annum. The first incumbent was the REV. JAMES BRIERLEY, M.A., of St. John's College, Cambridge, nephew of the above mentioned. He resigned in 1871, and was succeeded by the

REV. WILLIAM EDGE ELIJAH MASON BULL, B.A., of Queen's College, Cambridge, the present Vicar.

Mossley Church.

Charities.

THE following Charity Records are placed on the walls of the Court Room at the Town Hall:[a]

To commemorate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the election of Randle Wilbraham, of Rode Hall, in the County of Chester, Esquire, to the office of High Steward of this Borough, and also in testimony of their respect and veneration for his public and private character, a fund was raised by public subscription of the Mayor, Town Council, and Inhabitants of Congleton, in union with his tenantry and friends in general, and dedicated to the foundation of Three Free Scholarships at the Grammar School of this Borough, the nomination to which was vested in him and his heirs for ever. In the Mayoralty of William Warrington, Esquire, October 16th, 1848.

The Trustees appointed for the Fund were the owner of Rode Hall, the Mayor, and the Minister of Saint Peter's Church, for the time being.

[For further details of this Charity see next page, and under Grammar School.]

Thomas Davenport, of Congleton, Silk Throwster, by Will dated June 4th, 1872, bequeathed the Sum of One Hundred Pounds sterling to the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses for the time being of the Borough of Congleton, to be by them invested upon such securities as Trustees are by Law authorised to invest Trust Monies and to stand possessed of the Interest, Dividends, and annual produce thereof upon Trust for the benefit of such Twenty Poor Widows belonging to the Township of Congleton as to the Mayor for the time being of the said Borough shall appear most deserving of the same, such Interest, Dividends, and annual produce to be paid at such times and in such manner as the Mayor shall think best.

[a] For many details of these Charities I am indebted to various Statements of Corporation Moneys compiled by Mr. W. H. Krinks, the respected Borough Treasurer of Congleton for 17 years.

James Thorley, of Congleton, Cooper, bequeathed by Will dated 12th January, 1874, to the Town Council of Congleton, the sum of Two Hundred Pounds, to be invested by them and the annual Interest to be distributed by the Mayor for the time being to Poor Widows or other deserving poor persons of the said Borough.

[The income of a further bequest of fifty pounds, from the same source, is given to the Congleton Benevolent Sick Society.]

John Pedley, of Rode Heath, in Odd Rode, in the Parish of Astbury, Esquire, by his Will dated the 4th day of January, 1854, bequeathed the sum of One Thousand Pounds to his Trustees and Executors, John Dakin, Esquire,[b] (then the Mayor of Congleton) and William Bull, of High Street, Congleton, for their joint and several lives, and after the decease of the survivor of them, then to the Mayor of Congleton for the time being and his successors for ever, upon trust to invest the said sum of One Thousand Pounds in Government or other good Securities, and to apply the Dividends or Annual Produce thereof, in the purchase of Food, Clothing, or other necessaries, to be distributed during the week previous to Christmas Day in every year, amongst such Poor Widows, resident in Congleton, and not being then, or at any time previously, in receipt of parochial relief, as the said Trustees or Trustee should consider most deserving of the same.

[Invested with the Liverpool Mersey Dock and Harbour Board. The annual income is forty-five pounds.]

The Wilbraham Memorial Fund.

This Fund, the establishment and purpose of which are recorded on the Tablet over the Mayor's seat, amounted to £450 net, which was invested in the purchase of £517 19s. 8d. Consols; the annual income of which, amounting to £15 10s. 9d., subject to the deduction of £1 as fee to the Town Clerk, for keeping the accounts and making the payments, was applied to the free education of the Wilbraham Scholars. But this income proving insufficient for the purpose, the capital was sold out by the Trustees, realising £475 9s. 4d., and with the donation of £24 10s. 8d. from the Town Clerk, the clear sum of £500, was on the 27th day of November, 1877, invested at four per cent on a Mortgage Bond of the Corporation of Congleton, and the payments being since made by the Borough Treasurer, the Town Clerk's above mentioned annual fee ceased, and the clear annual sum of £20, is now applicable to the purposes of the said Trust.

Charles Goode, Mayor.

Congleton, 26th May, 1879.

[b] Mr. John Dakin, Tea Merchant, was Mayor of Congleton in 1854, 1855, and 1871. He was brother to the present Sir Thomas Dakin, late Lord Mayor of London.

1622. Dame Elizabeth Booth gave by deed to the Poor of Congleton, to be distributed in Bread weekly, the yearly sum of £2 10s. And the like sum to the Poor of Astbury. The Corporation add Two Shillings yearly to the Bread in Congleton, and the Township of Astbury other 2/– yearly to the Bread in Astbury.

[The Will of Dame Elizabeth Booth, of the city of Bath, dated Dec. 20th, 1622, bequeathed in trust to the Mayor and Corporation of Congleton the sum of £100, who "should from year to year, let out and lend the same to honest young tradesmen at 5 per cent interest, who were freemen of the borough, and carrying on some trade therein." The amount of loan not to exceed £10, and to be repaid in three years. The interest arising from the same to be equally divided in bread betwixt the poor of Congleton and Astbury. The moiety of £50 of this bequest, though never within the memory of man claimed by Astbury, was, in 1864, adjudged by the Charity Commissioners to belong legally to that parish; and the interest has since then been accordingly paid each year.]

1622. Dr. Dean gave by Will the Rents of Two Messuages in High Street, in Congleton, which are let for per annum, the same to be laid out in pious uses: Poor Persons are Cloathed ... ...£60.

[William Dean, Surgeon. His bequest also included a portion of land on Mossley Moss, and two sittings in the chapel of Congleton.]

1790. Samuel Malbon, Esq. gave by Will to be distributed in Bread, to Poor Persons, not Pensioners, in Congleton, on Easter Sunday, the annual Sum of ... ...£2 10s.

[The Will of Mr. Samuel Malbon, late of the City of Oxford, is dated 19 May, 1790. One hundred sixpenny loaves are annually distributed at St. Peter's Church on Easter Sunday, after divine service.]

1703. Robert Hulme gave by Will to the Schoolmaster of Congleton, the yearly sum of... ... ... £1.

[The Will of Dr. Robert Hulme, of Sandbach, is dated 5 August, 1708. It bequeathes the sum of twenty pounds upon trust to the Mayor and Corporation of Congleton, the interest to be applied as above.]

	£	s.	d.	
Jane Davis gave	2	10	0	These Charities are distributed in Money to Poor Housekeepers in Congleton, on every Saint Thomas's Day, along with Parnell's Charity.
Mr. Jolley ...	0	16	0	
Mr. Wilkinson ..	0	5	0	
Dr. Dean ...	0	5	0	
Mrs. Buckley ...	0	2	0	
Mr. Hancock ...	0	1	6	
Mr. Jackson ...	0	1	0	
Mr. Smith ...	0	5	0	
Mrs. Bellot ...	0	5	0	

1622. William Parnell, Gentleman, gave by Will, payable off Lands in Buglawton, an Annuity of £8; £2 whereof to the Minister of Congleton, 14/– for Aldermen's Breakfasts, and to be distributed in Money and Bread, the yearly sum of .. ..£5 0s.

[William Parnell was a citizen and "wax chandler" of the city of London. His will is dated 13 July, 1622, and bears the signature of Randle Toft, of Cloud Wood, and Margaret Sutton. See page 112.]

1661. Ralph Stubbs gave by Will to the Poor of Congleton, payable off Chapel House, in Congleton, to be distributed in Bread weekly, the annual Sum of ... ...£2 12s.
There is also 8/– yearly payable to the Corporation.

[Ralph Stubbs, citizen and merchant Taylor of London, bequeathed unto Richard Cotton his kinsman one messuage or tenement, called Chappel House, situated near the Church; and a close of land called Upper Riddings in Congleton, upon condition that the said Richard Cotton, his heirs, &c. should yearly pay or cause to be paid into the hands of the Mayor the sum of 3 pounds for ever, 52 shillings of which to be laid out in bread for the poor, and the residue to be expended by the said Mayor and Aldermen for the time being as they deemed fit.]

1712. John Holford, Gentleman, gave by Deeds one third part of the Rent of the Reeves Farm, in Newbold Astbury, for the support of Poor Persons, not Pensioners, in Congleton. In 1811, the proportion of Rent is £40. And one third part to Poor Persons of the like description, in the Township of Newbold Astbury, and the remaining third part to the Poor of Middlewich.

[One provision contained in this bequest was to set aside a sum of money for the purpose of keeping in repair the tombstone of the testator, situated on the south-east side of St. Peter's Church Yard.]

1727. Samuel Moreton, Clerk, gave by Will, to be distributed in Bread to the Poor of Congleton, on Whitsunday, the annual sum of £1.

1761. Josiah Cragg gave by Deed to the Poor of Congleton, the Rent of Two Messuages in Congleton, which are set for per annum £18 18s.

1764. Samuel Leadbeater, [of Astbury] Gentleman, gave by Will to the Poor of Congleton, to be paid yearly on Christmas Day, from off his Messuage and Lands at Mossley Moss, the yearly sum of ... .£1 5s.

1773. Joseph Staton[c] gave by Will to be distributed among the Poor of Congleton, in Shoes and Stockings, Shirts and Shifts, the annual Sum of ... ...£16.

1790. Robert Hodgson, Esq., gave by Deed, payable off Land in Howey Lane, in Congleton, to be distributed amongst Six Poor Housekeepers, not Paupers, in Congleton, the yearly Sum of Ten Shillings each ... ...£3.

MARY and JUDITH ALSAGER, of Congleton,[d]

By their respective Wills, both dated 20th June, 1792, and severally proved at Chester on the 2nd and 31st days of July, 1804, by Thomas Rowley and the Rev. Jonathan Wilson, Clerk, the surviving Executors, ordered each a sum of £1000 (making together £2000) to be invested in the 3 per cent consolidated annuities, and transferred (as soon as all the Estate Trusts of the said Wills should be accomplished, which happened in 1854) to the Minister of Congleton and the Master of the Free Grammar School of Congleton, and their successors in office for ever, to be called the Trustees of Mary and Judith Alsager, of Congleton, and the Dividends to be paid equally among Ten old unmarried women, of good and reputable character, and reduced in circumstances, who have lived in Congleton; Five such others in the Parish of Biddulph, and Five such others in the Township of Alsager; such Twenty Women to be chosen annually by the said Trustees.

They also respectively ordered the purchase of £600 (making together £1200) in the same Funds, to be transferred to the same trustees, and one third part of the interest to be applied in procuring for honest distressed objects in Congleton, labouring in the last stage of Consumption, or other incurable disorders, such accommodation to alleviate their piteous situation, as their friends may not be well able to procure, and also in procuring for poor lying-in women in Congleton, some of the like accommodations; One other third part of the same interest in assisting labouring people inhabitants of Congleton to put out their children apprentices; and the remaining third part

[c] Of the parish of St. Leonard, Shoreditch.

[d] See St. Peter's Monuments, page 193.

in paying for the schooling and books of Boys living in Congleton, too lame to be put apprentices to the common handicraft trades, so as to fit them for Country Schoolmasters or Counting House Clerks, and in paying in the same manner for such an education of lame Girls living in Congleton, as may fit them for Schoolmistresses or to get their living by their needle.

N.B.—In January, 1815, the Executors sold out £100 from the last mentioned Stock (pursuant to the Wills) in order to replace a loss of £100 from moneys lent to a person during the lifetime of the Testatrixes. The amount still invested is £1100 on this account and £2000 on the first mentioned account.

In 1884 the following Charities, then invested with the Corporation, were transferred to the Charity Commissioners in London, with whom they are now invested: St. Thomas's Dole, Hulme's, Moreton's, Dame Booth's, Malbon's, Thorley's, and Davenport's.

Other bequests distinct from those recorded in the Court Room: Faulkner's Charity, a bequest of £480, invested with the Corporation at four per cent. The interest is equally distributed among twenty-four females not less than fifty years old. Sutton's Charity, a bequest of £200, invested with the Corporation at three per cent. The interest is intended for equal distribution among six aged men and six aged women. Mary Arnett's Charity, a small bequest of five pounds, distributed to poor widows on Ascension Day, at St. Peter's Church. Fitzadam's Charity, a bequest of £323, invested with the Corporation at four per cent. The interest is distributed among poor sick persons by the Benevolent Sick Society. Crewe Memorial Fund, a sum of money left by the Rev. Offley Crewe, late Rector of Astbury, for the encouragement of good and religious conduct and sound learning among boys and girls educated in any church school in the old parish.

THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL AND SCHOOLHOUSE.
From a Drawing by MR. CHARLES WILSON.

Grammar School.

WITHIN sight of the old church of St. Peter, and skirting its graveyard, is the Town Grammar School, with the quaint low gabled residence of the Head Master close by. The origin of the school has always been assigned to the ancient rulers of the town, by whom it is supposed to have been founded without charter some time in the fifteenth century. From records extant, dating back to Queen Elizabeth's time, it is understood that its original use was to teach Latin and Greek free to the sons of burgesses who were freemen; the sum of sixteen pounds per annum, issuing from various sources of Corporation property, being paid as stipend to the Master. Bishop Gastrell writes of it[a]: "Here is a School free to y^e^ Children of all Burgesses and Freemen who are inhabitants, the Master is put in by y^e^ Corporation, and has only an old stipend of £16 per annum wh^ch^ they pretend they may withdraw." This was augmented about the beginning of the last century by the usual branches of a general education being added to the school system at an extra quarterage charged to the pupils. By the will of Mr. Samuel Malbon, son of a former Master (to be noticed in due order) dated 1789, a small close of land near the school, worth some six pounds per annum, was left for the further increase of the Master's stipend. Twenty shillings per annum under the will of Dr. Hulme, dated 1736, is also paid for the same purpose.

[a] *Notitia Cestriensis*, *p*. 84.

The school of ancient days, called the Free, or Town's School, stood on the same ground as the Master's residence now occupies, and was formed in the usual black-and-white half-timbered fashion. In the Deposition of Mr. John Vardon, respecting the Old Chapel in 1735,[b] the school is mentioned: "that when he first knew the Chapel and Chapel yard, there was an old building standing upon the Chapel yard, which was used as a school and belonged to the Corporation. That the Corporation (who appoint and pay the Master) rebuilt and enlarged the School about sixty years ago and built an house adjoining to it for the Master upon the Chapel yard." The following items of its history are gleaned from the Town Accounts:

1584	Payd Ric Marten for wyndyng & daubyn the scholehouse ...	0	1	8
	Item for xxiii sheaves of barlye strawe & twoe of Rye strawe to the Cokepytte & schoolhouse...	0	5	0
1588	Ja Moore for carryinge stuffe from the olde schole to the lower chapple [An old school mentioned at this date.]	0	0	4
1589	Payd the Slater for slattynge the scholehouse	1	2	0
	Payd Roger Potts y^e^ mason for parte of his wages at the scholehouse	0	2	4
	Payd Rondull Stopport for ii gables to y^e^ scholehouse	0	1	8
	Payd Mathewe Holydaye for weather borde for y^e^ schole... ...	0	2	6
1590	Payd the Schoolmaster his quarters wages	3	6	8
1591	Payd more for dayes work for four men to leade plaster to the scholehouse	0	0	8
1596	Payd Alderman Thomson for leadynge xv loades of clay that made the schole floore	0	3	3
1600	Payd Willm Whyttacar & Willm Poynton for carynge the small tymbers of the olde Scholehouse into the other Schole ...	0	1	0
1601	Payd for brycks to floore the Scholehouse	1	11	6
1608	Mr. Richard Spenser for quarte of wyne suger & cakes bestowed at the hyringe of the Scholm^r^ upon M^r^ Dodd (Rector of Astbury, who probably examined and certified the new Minister) ...	0	4	0
1620	Geven to Calib y^e^ muzitian by consent of the four overseers for his paynes in comynge from Chester & playinge for the Schollers in their play on Shrove Tuesday	1	0	0
	ffor neales to sett up the Scaffold for the Schollers to play on ...	0	0	8
1640	Roger Slater part of his wages for work done at Schoolhouse & Steeple	0	16	7
1667	Payd at the Releasinge of the Scollers at y^e^ Scoole	0	3	0
1673	Pd at Looseing the Schollers (in cakes and sack)	0	2	6

The present school, erected in 1814, on a site of land given by Sir Edmund Antrobus, is a plain brick building of one story. Engraved on the stone lintel over the entrance are the words:

CONDITA
J. BROADHURST ARMIG:
PRÆT: MUNICIP:
A.D. MDCCCXIV.

[b] Town Records, miscellaneous paper.

Masters.

THE presentation to the Mastership of the Congleton Grammar School was, until modern times, vested in the Corporation; the Bishop's consent to the nomination, and that the Master should belong to the Church of England, being conventional restrictions.[a] In the year 1845, a vacancy occurring, the right to nominate a new Master was claimed, (under the Municipal Corporation Act of 1835) to be in the Charity Trustees, and not in the newly-formed Corporation. This dispute was ultimately determined by application to the High Court of Chancery, which adjudged the right of presentation to be a trust, and, therefore, under the new law, legally vested in the Charity Trustees.

The old stipend of £16, like the Minister's, was often in arrears: the accounts shew by what irregular instalments the same was paid.[b] From these accounts the names of the earlier Masters have been obtained; but in many instances there is nothing by which to distinguish the rank of head or under Master, both of whom not unfrequently also served the office of Minister of the chapel.[c]

Mr. Tyllman, 1584–93.

1584	Imprimis, Mr. Tyllman, y^e^ Schoolm^r^ his quarters wages	1	0	0

Mr. William Pryse, 1593–95.

1593-4	Payd Mr. Pryse, our Scholem^r^ his quarters wages	1	13	4
	Payd John Henshawe & Humphraye Newton wch they lent to make up of Mr. Pryses last quarters wages	0	2	0
1594	Payd Mr. Pryse for sayinge service ii Sabbath dayes	0	11	0
	Payd that was geven to Mr. Pryse, Scholm^r^ his goeynge awaye at request of Mr. Stubbes, by consent of Mr. Spenser, Mr. Grene, and others	0	6	8

Mr. James Broster,* 1594–97.

1595	Payd Mr. Broster the Minister for sayinge service & teachynge Schollers	3	6	8

[a] With few exceptions the Masters have always been Clergymen.

[b] In point of fact the so-called stipend was merely the produce of various "burgages" and lands bequeathed to the school by intending benefactors, of which the Corporation, as Trustees, frequently absorbed the rents, and paid the Master what they pleased.

[c] Those marked with an asterisk served the office of Schoolmaster and Minister combined.

Mr. John Whyte, 1597–9.

1598 Payd Mr. Whyte our Scholm[r] beynge newlye hyred 0 10 0

Mr. Robert Farryngton, 1599–1601.

Mr. Shenton, 1601–4.

1601 Payd Henrye Bowker for fechynge the scholm[rs], Mr. Shenton, books & apparell from Oxforde 1 6 8

Mr. Large, 1604–6.

Mr. Bagott, 1606–8.

Mr. Pryse,* 1608–12.

1608 Payd to Mr. Pryse our reader & scholm[r] his quarters wages ... 3 6 8
1609 Also payd to Mr. Pryse Scholm[r] & Curate his quarters wages ... 4 0 0

Mr. Cappes,* 1612–14.

1612 Payd to Robt Shawe for bringinge downe Mr. Cappes from Oxforde 0 15 0
1612 Item payd Mr. Cappes to be made parson[d]... ... ... 1 10 0

Mr. Thorley, 1614–15.

Mr. Gryffyne, 1615–16.

1616 Paid Robt Hill for goinge to Oxford for y[e] Scholem[r] 0 10 0

Mr. Loddington,* 1616–17.

Mr. Redman,* 1617.

Mr. Typpynge, 1620.

Mr. Heighurst, 1624.

Mr. Maddock, 1626.

Mr. Callingewoode, 1630.

Mr. Powell, Oxford, 1636.

Mr. Andrew Bowrie,* 1638.

A suit of some consequence between the Corporation and Mr. Bowrie was tried at Chester in 1640. It was lost by the Corporation, solely from the want of jurisdiction at Chester, Congleton being an appendage of the Duchy of Lancaster.

[d] Since printing the names of the old chapel ministers I have discovered this entry in the Accounts.

1640	Paid to Sargeant Bearwoode for his hand to the Bill of complaint against Mr. Bowry, and correctinge the same, touchinge the Scholehouse Rooms	1	0	0
	Paid to Mr. Harper for a Snbpena and for drawinge the said Bill	0	7	7
	Paid for a Messenger to carrye downe the Bill to Chester... ...	0	2	8
	Spent by Ald Walker and John Forde upon a journey to attend the Vice Chamberlan upon a reference obtayned by Mr. Bowrey touchinge our Suit in the Exchequer	0	6	4

Mr. Doyle, 1639.

Robert Newcome, 1640–1.

1641 Mr. Robt Newcome for a quarter and a haulfes teachinge Schoole £vi and for readinge prayers xv*s*.

Mr. Robert Newcome was the eldest son of Stephen Newcome, M.A., Rector of Caldecot, co. Huntingdon, by his wife Rose, eldest child of Henry Williamson, D.D., of Connington. The famous Henry Newcome, (see below) who was fourth brother to Robert, has left the following note in his Diary:

"When my eldest brother, after he was Bachelor in Arts, was made Master of the Free School at Congleton in Cheshire, I was, in the year 1641, about May 4th, brought down thither to him, and there went to school three quarters of a year, until Feb. 13th; at which time that eloquent and famous Dr. Thomas Dodd was parson at Astbury, the parish church to Congleton, where I several times, (though then but a child) heard him preach."[e]

Robert Newcome remained but a little over a year at Congleton. Early in 1641 he was called home to the deathbeds of his father and mother, both of whom were buried in one coffin 2 Feb., 1641. The rectory of Caldecot, being intended for Robert, who was then un-ordained, Mr. John Ambrose, afterwards Senior Fellow of St. John's College, took the title of the living until Robert was ordained deacon, and able to take it himself. Tobias Parnell[f] and Robert Newcome were stannch friends, and the latter's last visit to this town was 20 June, 1653, when he came, accompanied by his brothers Henry and Richard, "to the funeral of our old friend, Mr. Tobias Parnell, Alderman of Congleton."[g] Robert Newcome, baptised 27 Nov., 1620, married Ann, daughter of the Rev. John Anderson, Rector of Wymmington, co. Bedford.

[e] Newcome's Autobiography, edited by the Rev. Richard Parkinson, D.D., F.S.A., vol. i. page 4.

[f] See page 110.

[g] *Ibid* vol. i. page 44.

Mr. Monckton, 1642.

Mr. Cope, 1644.

Henry Newcome, 1647–8.

This dauntless Nonconformist (that was to be) came direct from St. John's College, Cambridge, where he was admitted in 1644, to be Master at the Congleton Free School. He was baptised 27 Nov., 1627, and his coming to Congleton in Sep., 1647, would make him about twenty years of age at that time. At Candlemas the same year he took his degree of B.A. He remained Master of the Congleton School about twelve months (during which period his younger brother Richard, afterwards Rector of Wynnington, went to school to him) when he was appointed reader to Mr. Ley, who was then in possession of the Rectory at Astbury. Newcome relates in his Diary that about this time he "shortly fell to preaching, sometimes at Congleton, and sometimes at Astbury."[h] He was ordained at Sandbach 22 August, 1648, and in the same year became Incumbent of Goostree. He was presented to the Rectory of Gawsworth in 1650, where he stayed for seven years, preaching his farewell sermon there 12 April, 1657. From Gawsworth he removed to Manchester, and became chaplain at the Collegiate Church, where he remained up to 1660.

His interesting Diary shews the hard struggles Henry Newcome underwent after this date. He continued to preach in Manchester and other places till 1662, when he was silenced by the Act of Uniformity. He hailed the passing of the Act of Indulgence in 1672 with great joy, and immediately licensed his own house and a barn in which he preached for some time. During the last five years of his life he was pastor of the Cross Street Chapel, Manchester, where he died 17 Sep., 1695, aged 68 years. He married in 1648 Elizabeth, daughter of Peter Mainwaring, of Smallwood, in the parish of Astbury. She died 8 Feb., 1700–1, aged 84 years, and was buried beside her husband in the west alley, near the pulpit, in the above-mentioned Chapel.

Mr. Thompson, 1649–50.

[h] Newcome's Autobiography vol. i. page 10.

Richard Harwood, 1650–1.

Mr. Street, 1651–5.

He was a friendly acquaintance of Henry Newcome, who mentions him twice in his Diary.

John Newton, 1655.

"24 July, 1655. It is in like manner considered of and ordered that whereas Mr. Jno. Newton, scholar, son of Wm. Newton, of this Boro', shoemaker, hath accordinge unto further Order been approved and is recommended unto us by Mr. Langley, the younger, and Mr. Newcome, both Ministers of the Gospel, to have sufficient abilitye for a Schoolemaster, that the said Jno. Newton be forthwith admitted and receved to be Schoolem[r] in the free Schoole of this Boro."[i]

John Smith, 1659.

"That Mr. Jno. Smith, of Hay Carr, in the County of Stafford, Gent., be admitted Schoolm[r] and receive the yearly stipend of £16."

Mr. Barber,* 1668.

"Ordered this day that Mr. Barber, Minister, should be Schoolemaster too if he pleased."

Mr. Brisbourne, 1671.

John Whittaker,* 1677.

He remained Head Master till 1684, when, at a Court of Assembly, it was "agreed that whereas Mr. Hancock the present Curate of this Towne hath given warninge to leave this Towne at Christmas next, Mr. John Whiteare the present Schoolm[r] of this Town shall succeed him in the place of Curate."

William Brereton, 1684.

Mr. Mayor, 1685.

He was formerly Schoolmaster of Sandbach. During the Civil War period the rule of appointing Clergymen only to the post of Master was departed from, and several individuals not in orders were appointed.

[i] Town Records Order Book.

Thomas Hall, 1698.

He was formerly a Cordwainer. The petition sent to the Bishop to license Hall to be Master, amongst others, is signed by Thos. Weller, Vicar of Sandbach, and Ri: Jebb, Curate of Astbury. In another record he is described as "a scoller and a godly man."

Josiah Henshaw, 1702.

"Mr. Josiah Henshaw was duly eleeted Schoolmaster for this Town accordinge to antient eustom upon the seventeenth of Aprill by the majoritye of eight voyces."

Ralph Malbon,* 1709–21.

Under this able and learned man the school obtained an eminence which it had never before known. Mr. Ralph Malbon, who has been already mentioned, held the offices both of Minister and Schoolmaster. It has been said that among his pupils were included boarders from some of the principal families in Cheshire. Whilst Master in 1720 he compiled a curious book of MS. in the form of a letter to his old preceptor and friend, the Rev. Mr. M——den, B.D. The following are a few extracts from this ingenious composition, which is written in the rarest form of caligraphy, and is entitled on every page, "The Present Method of Congleton School."

"(Sunday morning.) My own sons, boarders, and some particular boarders of my neighbours, repeat to me Grotius' Latin Catechism, or English, as they are able. (Att Noon.) All the boarders in the town, my own and my friend's children, meet me between twelve and one in the school, and read the Greek Testament, Latin Testament, and English Bible, in three setts. I began this att first for the sake of my boarders in town. Sinee they are not under their parents' eye, I thought it my duty to take this care of them, to see they are in town, well employed, have been att Church in the forenoon and are ready for evening service. (Att Night.) We read two chapters, some exposition of the Church Catechism, often Dr. Beveridge's; then they are examined in & repeat the Latin & English Church Catechism, & joyn in our family prayers and psalms.

I will now tell you what exercises are performed out of school. For a Holy Day I give them sometimes the History or Praise of the Saint of the Day in an oration, or the Gospel or Epistle in Latin, Greek or English verse.

We begin our school every morning with Latin prayers. I dismiss the school likewise att night with Latin prayers. Wee are alwayes att school between 6 and 7 in y^e^ morning, and for afternoon untill between 5 and 6 att night, y^r^for (therefore) in the shortest winter days wee use candle light.

The 6 Head Classes speak Latin whilst they are in the school or play ground, and give account of all lessons and exercises in Latin. I give out a Ferrule morning and noon to a custos. Whoever speaks English, receives it with a blow. And I punish him myself in whose hands I find it att noon or night with the ferrule or some little exercise.

On Monday morning and every morning w^n^ they have the day before heard a Sermon, I require of the whole school to repeat the text by heart, haveing before fairly written it in English, Latin, or Greek, as they are able. Besides y^e^ text, y^e^ boys of y^e^ upper school bring y^e^ heads att least & as much of the sermon written very fair, as near as they can remember in y^e^ preacher's very words. And if any boy be absent from Church upon any excuse, sickness excepted, he getts by heart according as his memory is some part of a chapter in y^e^ Bible. This makes them less fond of loytering at home."

The following memorandum appears in the Corporation Records:

Whereas by an order made the 17th day of June anno dni 1709. It was y^n^ ordered that 2 Schoolmasters should be Elected to Supply the school for the sd Burrough. And amongst other things it was then also ordered y^t^ y^e^ sd Two Schoolmas^r^ & either of them soe to be Eleeted should before their entry upon the poss'on of the sd Schoole give a Bond of the penaltie of £100 to the Mayo^r^, upon half a years warning to be given then to Resigne their sd places off the Mayo^r^ Aldermen & Councell men or [as] ye maj^or^ pte of y^m^ should think fit. And Whereas also the same day Ralph Malbone Clerk & Minister of the sd Burrough was eleeted Head Schoolmr & Mr. Thom. Bourne was elected under schoolmr for the sd Bur. & sometime after each of y^m^ gave sueh Bond as is afore meneoned which Bonds are now missing & eant be found. And fforasmueh as the majo^r^ pte of this Company are Desirous that the Company in Generall should be held in order to diseover whether any p'son therein coneerned hath been Instrumental in Coneealing or Delivering up y^e^ s^d^ Bonds. It is therefore hereby ord^d^ y^t^ the whole Company shall each of them take an oath whether they or any of them know any thing of the s^d^ Bonds or either of y^m^ or the cause of their being wanting or delivered up or missing.

A further account of the Rev. Ralph Malbon is given on pages 184–8–9. The following is a copy of a letter to the Bishop of Chester requesting him to license the newly-appointed Usher:

My very good Lord,

The bearer, Mr. Royle, is I think, well qualifyed both for morals and learning, to be Usher in my School. If your Lordship please to grant him a license to be so, I hope he will do good service in it. To

My very good Lord,

Your Lordship's most humble & obedient servant,

Congleton, RA: MALBON.

Aug. 17, 1719.[k]

REV. THOMAS MALBON, 1721–77.

He was the son of Ralph Malbon, whom he succeeded at the school, and was known as the absentee Rector of Hoyland. He died in 1777, having held the school for fifty-six years; leaving it as small in numbers and scholarship as it was great under his energetic father.

REV. JONATHAN WILSON, 1777–1810.

In 1775, being at that time incumbent of the little chapelry at Rusland, near Windermere, Mr. Wilson came to Biddulph as curate under the Rev. John Gresley, whom he succeeded as vicar of Biddulph in 1783. In 1776 he accepted the post of second Master at the Congleton Grammar School, and on Mr. Malbon's decease in 1777 he was elected to succeed him, and held the post for thirty-three years, dying in the year 1810. That the Rev. Jonathan Wilson was a skilled Latin scholar there is lasting testimony in the translations he made of the Town Charters and Records which are now preserved in the Corporation Muniments. He raised the school again from its lowered condition, and from a record made by him it appears that the number of boys received by him during his tenure was 715.

REV. EDWARD WILSON, 1810–44.

He was nephew of the Rev. Jonathan Wilson, whom he succeeded on his decease in 1810. Mr. Edward Wilson has already been noticed in conjunction with Buglawton and other churches. When twenty-four years old, on the nomination of the Rev. John Darcy, he was ordained to the curacy of Marton. Afterwards he became successive curate of Brereton, and High

[k] Transcript from the Registry Office, Chester.

Leigh, serving the latter place for seven years. In 1819 he was appointed minister of Odd Rode, which post he held for twenty-one years. In 1840 he accepted the incumbency of Bnglawton, where he went to reside in 1844; dying there in 1858. Under him the school was eminent and successful, the number of pupils during his mastership being 722. Five of his Under Masters became benefieed elergymen, namely: Revs. B. Butterworth, Dr. Rushton, (Viear of Blackburn and Arehdeacon of Manchester) John Porter, W. Suteliffe, (Vicar of Bosley) and H. Suteliffe, (Vicar of Keele, and Rural Dean.)[k]

Rev. Matthew Pugh, M.A., 1846.

In 1844–5 the progress of the school was suspended by the lengthened litigation between the Corporation of Congleton and the Charity Trustees, respecting the presentation to the Mastership and the aneient eonstitntion of the School. On the termination of this dispute the Rev. Matthew Pugh, of St. Catherine's Hall, Cambridge, and formerly curate of Birtles, and mathematical master of Macclesfield Grammar School, was eleeted by the Charity Trustees, and held the appointment until 1854, when he resigned the Mastership at Congleton for that of Church Hill School, Brighton. Subsequently he became vicar of Great Harwood, near Blaekburn; Head Master of Rishworth Endowed School, viear of Marple, co. Chester; and rector of St. Thomas's, Stockport, in 1876.

The interesting endowment noticed on page 227, and known as the Wilbraham Memorial Fund, was founded in 1848, and eonsisted of a sum of over £500 collected in Congleton and neighbourhood, and presented as a memorial to Mr. Randle Wilbraham,[l] of Rode Hall, on the eompletion of his fiftieth anniversary of the High Stewardship of Congleton.[m] Mr. Wilbraham generously devoted the whole for the purpose of establishing a fund for the perpetual free education of three boys at the school. In commemoration of this a large gold medal was struek, bearing on the obverse the Wilbraham and

[k] For this and other information relating to the Grammar School, I am much indebted to Mr. John Wilson.

[l] See page 47.

[m] 16 Oct., 1848, in the Mayoralty of Mr. Wm. Warrington.

Congleton Arms, on separate shields, with the words "Randle Wilbraham, Esquire, High Steward of Congleton"; and on the reverse the following inscription: "To celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of his election to the office of High Steward, and in lasting token of their respect and veneration, three Free Scholarships were founded, and this medal presented to him by his friends, Oct. 16, 1848."

The medal, and a massive silver casket, containing the deed of endowment, are now prized heirlooms at Rode Hall.

Rev. W. C. Arnold, M.A., 1854–5.

Of Trinity College, Cambridge. He resigned in 1855, and was elected to the head Mastership of Chelmsford Grammar School, and subsequently became rector of Badsworth, Yorkshire.

Rev. W. B. Grix, M.A., 1855.

Of Queen's College, Cambridge. Mr. Grix, the present Master, was Curate of St. Peter's Church at the time of his election to the Congleton Grammar School. During his thirty-two years' tenure of the office he has fulfilled its duties with energy and skill. In 1864 he received the appointment of Chaplain to Sir C. W. Shakerley, Bart., vacated by the death of the Rev. C. B. Hodges, M.A. Mr. Grix holds the rank of Major in the Fifth Cheshire Rifle Volunteers.

Roman Catholic Church.

THE origin of the Roman Catholic Mission in Congleton is traced to the Rev. John Hall, late of St. Alban's Church, Macclesfield, who came to Congleton in the year 1821 and commenced a meeting place in the house of one Tracey, (a weaver by trade) situated in Moody Street. Here the few Catholics, then only twenty-four in number, worshipped until 1822, when the club-room of the "Angel" Inn,[a] situated in the same street, and occupied by Mr. John Booth, was hired and used as a meeting house until the present church was built in 1826. This is a substantial brick building, dedicated to St. Mary, and erected in West Street. The interior is of graceful appearance, and has a fair painting of the Saviour suspended over the altar. A wooden gallery over the west entrance holds the organ and choir. A handsome stone cross in the graveyard bears the following inscription:

This Cross was erected July 12th, 1876, the 50th Anniversary of the opening of this Church.

Pray for the souls of all the faithful departed.

Pray for the souls of those whose bodies lie here interred.

Pray for the soul of Rev. F. Anderton, for many years pastor of this Church.

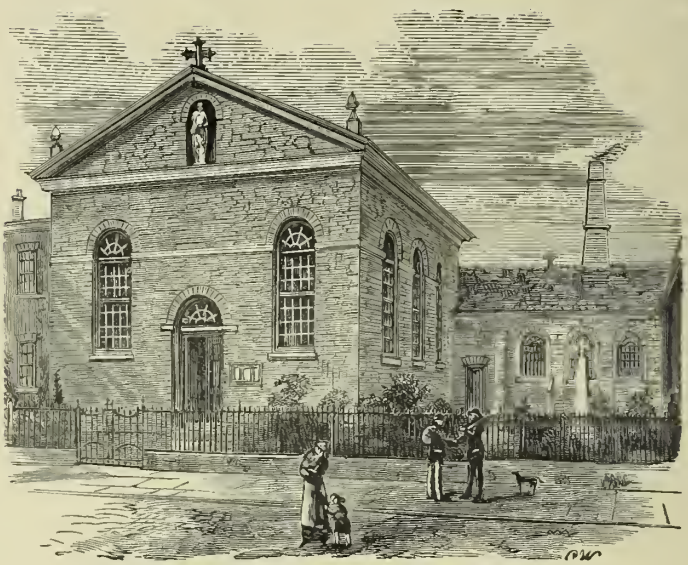
PRIESTS AT ST. MARY'S CHURCH.[b]

REV. DR. HALL served the Congleton church until 1830. He died at Macclesfield 1st October, 1876, in his 80th year.

REV. PHILIP ORRELL came in 1827 as the first resident priest. He remained but a little over six months, when the duties again fell to the care of Dr. Hall.

[a] A portion of this building, now in ruins, still remains.

[b] Mrs. Johnson, of Congleton, and Mr. I. Finney, of Macclesfield, have kindly assisted me in collecting these names.



St. Mary's Church, Congleton.

Rev. C. Brigham took charge of the mission from 1830 to 1833, and was succeeded by

Rev. James Platt. He stayed a little over a year, and was followed in 1835 by

Rev. F. Anderton, who remained until 1840. He subsequently became priest to St. Peter's, Stalybridge, whence he returned to Congleton in 1853; dying there 18th April, 1855, aged 56 years.

Rev. James Fisher served at Congleton for ten years, from 1840 to 1850. He was succeeded by

Rev. John Hill, who remained until January, 1853.

Rev. Hugh Lynch became pastor here on the death of Father Anderton in 1855. During his ministration the Day and Sunday Schools were built. He removed to Knutsford about the year 1859,[c] and was successively followed at Congleton by

Rev. Joseph Daly,[d] and

[c] Died at Bangor, 13 December, 1883.

[d] Now at Neston (1887).

Rev. George B. Clegg,[e]

Rev. Francis O'Neill was the next priest, and held the appointment from 1864 to 1873, when he removed to Plowden Hall, Lydbury North, (his present abode) and was followed at Congleton in 1873 by

Rev. Frederick Waterhouse, formerly of Stalybridge. During his residence the present organ-loft and gallery were placed in the church, the schools enlarged, and the Commemoration Cross (already noticed) erected. He resigned in 1880, and became missionary priest at Crewe.[f]

Rev. Patrick Power, formerly of Flint, succeeded Father Waterhouse. He died 1885, and was followed by

Rev. George Carton is the present priest.

[e] Now Canon Clegg, at Horton (1887).

[f] Now at Edgeley, Stockport.

Nonconformity.

THE eventful period from the accession of James I. to the passing of the Act of Uniformity in 1662 marks the infancy of Nonconformity in Congleton; the beginning of what, during the last two centuries, has attained an established position of considerable importance. The effects of the Reformation were then moving the axis of the whole state. Sects arose demanding for themselves the right of private judgment on matters religious, and opposing all formulas of creed and any fixed Liturgy. Of these, the Puritans, whose conflict lay against the Episcopacy of England, became a large and influential body, which, before the death of James I., conspicuously allied itself with the rigid Presbyterianism of Scotland. The adoption of the Solemn League and Covenant resulted in the sequestration of over three thousand clergymen of the Church of England, of whom thirty were of Cheshire. Amongst these were Thomas Hutchinson of Astbury,[a] William Hutchins of Gawsworth,[b] and John Robinson of Brereton. Astbury was not suffered long to be without a pastor, the first minister appointed by the Parliament after Mr. Hutchinson's dismissal being

JOHN LEY, M.A. One of the firmest puritans of the times, Mr. Ley,[c] though born at Warwick, is said to have been a

[a] He was reinstated at Astbury 21 Feb., 1660, and died 15 Dec., 1675.

[b] Of Brasenose College, Oxford. Presented to Gawsworth, 19 Sep., 1630, by Thomas Drinkwater, of Chester. He died 1647.

[c] He was the author of several scholarly works, among which his "Apology in Defence of the Geneva Notes on the Bible" and "Pattern of Piety" are perhaps the most important.

descendant of the Cheshire Leys. At an early age he became a student of Christ Church, Oxford, and was presented by the Dean and Chapter to the vicarage of Great Budworth in 1616. Subsequently he became prebendary of Chester Cathedral Church, and rector of Ashfield. His name is first on the list of signatures to the Cheshire Attestation of 1648 as "the present preacher at Astbury." During his sojourn here he was the means of bringing into prominence several men who attained notoriety as zealous nonconformists. Of these, John Murcot and Henry Newcome, his successive curates at Astbury, stand conspicuous in their allegiance to Presbyterianism and the Covenant.

John Murcot, B.A., of Merton College, Oxford, a name well known in nonconformist literature, was the son of Job Murcot, a lawyer of Warwick. He was ordained to Astbury Church, 8 March, 1647, which he resigned the next year, and became minister of West Kirby. As such he signed the Cheshire Attestation of 1648.

Henry Newcome (already noticed as Master at the Free Grammar School) followed Mr. Murcot at Astbury. He removed the same year to Goostrey.

John Machin, born at Seabridge, near Newcastle-under-Lyme, 1624, was educated at Jesus College, Cambridge, and took his B.A. in 1649. He was ordained at Whitchurch in the same year, and settled at Ashbourne, co. Derby, in 1650. He removed from Ashbourne, to Astbury in 1652. Henry Newcome was his friend and biographer. He removed to Whitley, near Great Budworth, in 1661, from the parsonage of which he was ejected by the Act of Uniformity the year after.

George Moxon, one of the seven ministers in the then Deanery of Middlewich expelled from their livings between 1660 and 1662, was born at Wakefield, and educated at Cambridge. Calamy, in his *Nonconformist Memorial*, writes of him that "he was a good lyric poet." Shortly after leaving college he was appointed chaplain to the puritan soldier, Sir William Brereton. Later, when serving the cure of St. Helen's, in Prescot parish, co. Lancaster, he was several times censured by Dr. Bridgeman, Bishop of Chester, for ignoring the ceremonies of the church; and, in 1637, so defiant had become his attitude that he was compelled to leave England. Returning in 1653 he was nominated to Astbury to assist John Machin in

his ministrations there. These two apostles of nonconformity, with their families, enjoyed together the comfortable rectory at Astbury until 1660, when the worthy old rector, Mr. Hutchinson, came again into his plundered living.

What a period of eventful history, both for Church and Realm! And Congleton seems to have been agitated as greatly as any other similar town in England. With the return of Mr. Hutchinson came the expulsion of Thomas Brook from Congleton, and George Moxon from Astbury. Brook, as has been already shewn, continued to preach at the old Hall of Moreton.[d] Moxon, a man still of much vigour and indomitable will, went about preaching in private houses on the moorlands about Rushton until the Act of Uniformity was passed, when he came to reside in Congleton; and under the Declaration of Indulgence of Charles II. he licensed his own dwelling,[e] situated near Dane Bridge, as a

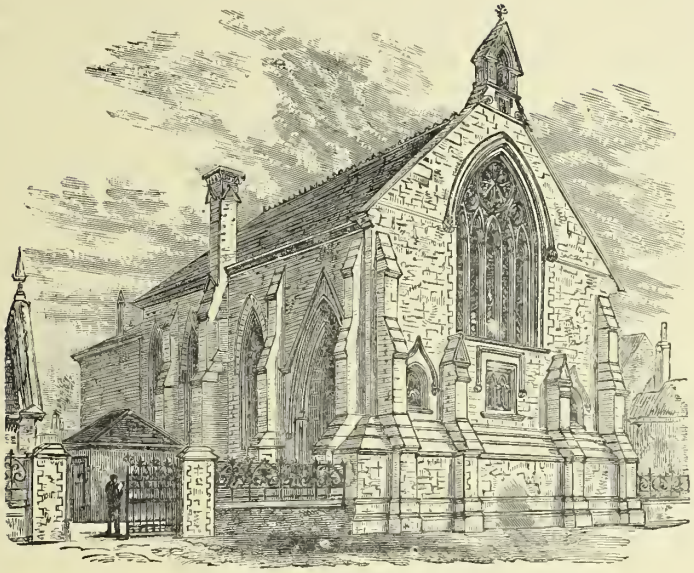
DISSENTERS' MEETING HOUSE.

In this, the first dissenting meeting house in Congleton, Mr. Moxon continued to preach until his death, 15 September, 1687. He died of palsy, in his eightieth year; just when his efforts to build a NEW MEETING HOUSE had attained success. Of this building there is no trace, further than that found on an old Indenture between Thomas Green and John Sydebottom relating to the transfer of property, where two sittings in the "Protestant Dissenters' Meeting House" is mentioned. It was opened in September, 1687, the first sermon being the funeral sermon of old Moxon, preached by Mr. Eliezer Birch, of Dean Row, near Wilmslow.

THOMAS IRLAM is the next recorded minister. He studied at the Yorkshire Academy of Mr. Frankland, and settled at Congleton probably *circa* 1690. In the agreement of the Presbyterian and Congregational ministers of 1691 he signed himself "minister at Congleton." During his residence an intolerant party feeling was manifested here among church

[d] Little Moreton Hall, on the road from Congleton to Newcastle, if not the most pretentious, is decidedly one of the most picturesque and perfect specimens of half-timbered architecture in existence.

[e] In the License Book, preserved at the Public Record Office, are the following entries: "Presbyterian, Ashbury parish, Andrew Barnett, in his own house, 13 May, '72." "Congregationall, Asbury parish, George Moxon, in his house, 30 April, '72."



UNITARIAN CHAPEL.

people and dissenters: and on the accession of George I. a riot ensued, culminating in a rush for the Meeting House, which was burst open and the contents entirely destroyed. The number of Nonconformists in Congleton at this time is set down at two hundred, of whom thirty were voters for the county.[f] In 1733–4 another MEETING HOUSE[g] was erected on a site of ground purchased for twenty pounds from John Sydebottom, situated on the west side of Mill Street, which lapsed to the friends of Unitarianism. This old chapel was removed in 1883, and the present handsome building of stone erected on its site. The following list of Unitarian ministers is gathered chiefly from a small pamphlet of material for a History of Unitarianism in Congleton,[h] and from *Nonconformity in Cheshire.*

[f] Printed in *Nonconformity in Cheshire*, from a MS. in Dr. William's Library, at London.

[g] This chapel was endowed with a house, or houses, and land, and with other property; the houses and land have been given by persons of orthodox views, the other property was of more recent bequest.

[h] By George Pickford, published 1883.

UNITARIAN MINISTERS.

Rev. Joseph Bourne. The year he commenced his ministration here is not known. He removed from Congleton to Hindley, co. Lancaster, in 1746, where he remained up to his death. He was the son of the Rev. Samuel Bourne, of Birmingham.

Rev. Robert Robinson, 1748–52. He removed to Duckinfield in 1752, and from thence to Hatherlow, where he died insane.

Rev. Benjamin Dawson, 1752–4. A pupil of Dr. Rotherham's. He went from Congleton to Southwark, and eventually conformed to the Established Church.

Rev. William Turner, 1754–61. Formerly of Allostock, near Knutsford. He was educated under Dr. Latham of Findern, near Derby, and at Glasgow. When living here he became the friend of Dr. Priestly, then living at Nantwich, and also of the noted Dr. Harland, who at that time kept an academy at Congleton.[1]

Rev. Thomas Astley, 1761–7. During his ministry a chapel house was erected. He removed from Congleton to Preston, and was succeeded by

Rev. John Boult, 1770–73. His name appears in a Petition to Parliament for enlarging the Toleration Act touching Dissenting ministers and schoolmasters. Leaving Congleton he went to reside at Bradwell, in Derbyshire.

Rev. Bristowe Cooper, 1775–81. No regular minister seems to have been stationed here until 1775. During Mr. Cooper's ministration his wife died at the age of 29, and was buried in the old meeting house. After his departure Messrs. George Chadwick, Higginson, and John Bell officiated, the next recorded minister being

Rev. John Rowbottom, 1797, of Cambridge. The date of his admission to the Congleton ministry is not known. He remained and died here in 1797.

Rev. James Hawke, 1797–1800. Formerly of Nottingham. He left Congleton for Manchester, and became Latin assistant at a school kept by the Rev. Mr. Grindrod.

Rev. Thomas Jones, 1800–12. Was unpopular among

[1] This academy was continued by subsequent ministers of the old meeting house.

the congregation. Leaving Congleton he became minister of Walmsley, and was succeeded by

Rev. Theophilus Brown, M.A., 1812–14, Fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge, and vicar of Hinton. He remained but two years, removing to Gloucester.

Rev. William Fillingham, 1814–53. He died at Congleton after a ministry of thirty-nine years. After his death the congregation was without any settled minister for upwards of twenty years.

Rev. J. C. Williams, 1873–6.

Rev. Iden Payne,[1] 1876–80.

Rev. George H. Smith, of Accrington, is the present minister.

Congregational Chapel.

THE Congregationalists obtained their first Chapel through the benevolence of Captain Jonathan Scott, of Shrewsbury, who came to Congleton in 1771. His own residence was his preaching place, and here he formed the nucleus of what eventually developed into an important congregation. Diversity of opinion was then rife among Congleton Nonconformists. The followers of John Wesley refused to recognise the Congregationalists, (or Calvinists as then called) otherwise than as opponents of Methodism; and on several occasions Captain Scott, being refused the loan of the chapel, preached in the open air. John Wesley mentions in his Diary:

"Thursday, Mch 28th, 1782, coming to Congleton, I found the Calvinists were just breaking in, and striving to make havoc of the flock. Is this brotherly love? Is this doing as we would be done by? No more than robbing on the highway. But it is *decreed* and they cannot help it; so we cannot blame them."

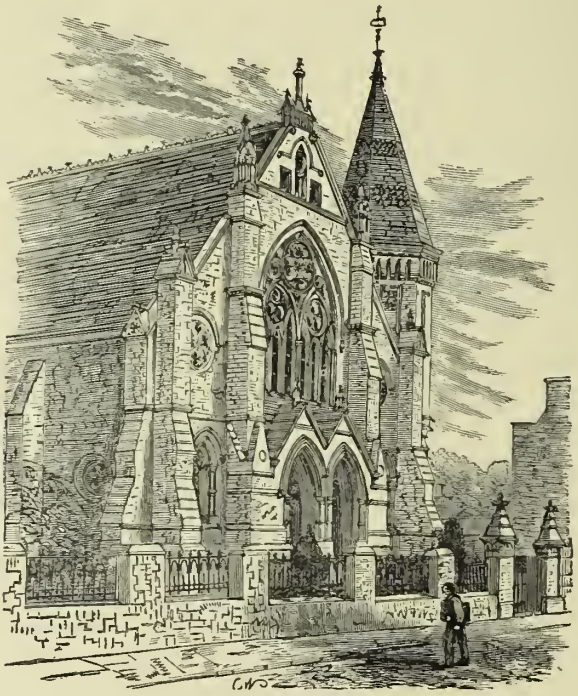
The work of Captain Scott was also furthered by the Rev. Rowland Hill, who preached here before the erection of the first chapel. This is a plain brick building in Mill Street, and was opened 17 November, 1790. After the completion of the new church it was purchased by the Freemasons of Congleton,

[1] Now at Stannington, near Sheffield.

and is now one of the finest and best furnished Halls in the Province of Cheshire.

PRESENT CONGREGATIONAL CHAPEL.

Situated in Antrobus Street; this is a structure of an extremely pretty design, formed in geometrical Gothic style, and built of the hard grey stone of the neighbourhood. Constructed in the form of a parallelogram, its dimensions measure eighty feet long by forty feet wide. A circular side projection, containing the gallery stairs, is on the front portion of the building; and at the rear are two smaller projections intended for the additional extension of transepts. The front elevation of the building, gable shaped, is artistically relieved by buttresses rising in pinnacles above the roof. The side elevation contains seven bays with buttresses raised from the ground to the eaves.



CONGREGATIONAL CHAPEL.

The circular gallery on the right of the building is corbelled out into an octagonal tower seventy feet high. The principal entrance consists of two doorways, coupled in the central space, between two buttresses, having deeply moulded arches resting on moulded and columned jambs. Under the building are the School, Lecture Rooms, and Vestry. The interior will seat over six hundred people. The principals of the roof are of hammer-beam construction; the height from the ridge to the floor being thirty-five feet. The open bench-seats are formed of unstained pitch pine, like the gallery at the entrance end.[a]

CONGREGATIONAL MINISTERS.

Rev. John Reece, 1793–97, was the first minister of the new chapel. He removed to Sheffield, where he died 8 January, 1801. His memoir is printed in the Evangelical Magazine, vol. x., page 41.

Rev. John Handforth, 1800–1. He removed to Gatley, where he was ordained, remaining pastor of the chapel there until 1813.

Rev. M. Parsons, 1801–2.

Rev. Thomas Bennett, 1805–7. He left Congleton for Duckinfield, and in 1819 became minister at Hatherlow, a pleasant little village about eight miles from the Derbyshire Peak, where he remained up to his death, 16 October, 1842.

Rev. James Howe, 1810–11.

Rev. John Williams, 1811–13.

Rev. John Bridgeman, 1813–14.

Rev. George Marris, 1814–22. Like his three predecessors Mr. Marris belonged to what was called the Countess of Huntingdon's Connection. On resigning his ministry he formed a congregation of dissenters who adopted some peculiar form of worship, and built their Meeting House in Park Street.[b]

Rev. John Johnson, 1826-30. Subsequently he conformed to the Established Church, and became Secretary to the Church of England Missionary Society. He was followed successively by

[a] The cost of the building was upwards of £5500. Two principal donors were Benjamin Radley, (Alderman) £1000; Samuel Maskery, £500.

[b] Now used by the Baptists.

Rev. George Edge,

Rev. S. Gibbons,

Rev. Joseph Moore, 1848–, is the present minister, and is just completing his fortieth anniversary. He was the friend and fellow-student of the great African explorer, the renowned Livingstone, who visited Congleton some years before his death. A portion of Mr. Moore's early life was spent in missionary work, principally in Tahiti.

Society of Friends.

THE only information I have been able to gather concerning the Society of Friends is connected with their Burial Ground at Eaton, a small township situated about two and a half miles from Congleton. The Quakers, as they were called, before the close of the Stuart dynasty, possessed six Burial Grounds in this county; three others were subsequently added. These were located at Frodsham, Over Whitley, Stockport, Mobberley, Middlewich, Nantwich, Holt, Macclesfield, and Congleton.

The Eaton Burial Ground dates from 1658, in which year a close of land, measuring some 260 yards, was purchased for the Friends by Joseph Endon from John Okes. A Meeting House existed on the ground as early as 1680; it was taken down in 1801. The earliest recorded interment is that of John Roylance, of Sandbach, in 1668. Upwards of 150 burials have taken place since then, the latest being in 1766.[a]

In 1880 some of the lost memorial stones were recovered, the ground restored and enclosed within a neat brick wall. In celebration of this event a meeting, presided over by Mr. Pearson, of Alderley, was held on Sunday, 22 August, in that year, when over 400 persons attended. Among the memorial stones is one to the memory of the wife of William Hall, of Congleton, concerning whom the following account is printed in the *Life of William Penn:*

"In 1690, during the mayoralty of Wm. Knight, a Quaker named William Hall, a shoemaker, was fined £20 by the mayor and justices

[a] From information of Alfred Fryer, Esq., of Wilmslow.

for having a meeting at his house; for which his mare was distrained when his wife was riding on her, and some time after they seized on his shoes in his shop. After narrating seizure of his furniture, it states that soon after the mare, of her own accord, came home, and the wife in William's absence let her in. The mare being cried, William went with two of his neighbours, and told the chief magistrate that he had the mare, and she was in the field without any lock to hinder them from her; and that if they had more right to her than he they might fetch her, otherwise if they pleased he would join issue with them to try whose the mare was. They refused his offer, and committed him to jail and arraigned him for his life as a felon, but he was acquitted by the judge and jury."

Wesleyan Chapel.

BEFORE the brothers Wesley came to Congleton a movement in support of their preaching existed here. John Wesley visited the district for the first time in 1745, and preached at the house of one Roger Moss, situated near Rode Hall. Charles Wesley preached in Congleton on his way to the north, and was followed in 1747 by his brother John, who preached at the same place. In his diary he writes—

"Saturday, May 9, 1747. After preaching at Booth-bank in the morning, and at noon near Northwich, where some of the gay and rich came to hear, I continued praying and talking with them till past two: we were then obliged to take horse for Astbury. Here likewise I found an open door, though many fine people were of the Congregation; but they behaved as people fearing God; as seriously as the poor ploughman.

"Sunday 10. I preached at Astbury at five; and at seven proclaimed, at Congleton Cross, Jesus Christ, our wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. It rained most of the time that I was speaking; but that did not hinder abundance of people from quietly attending. Between twelve and one I preached near Macclesfield, and in the evening at Woodley-green."

One of Wesley's chief friends was Thomas Buckley, who lived at the old Stoney-lane Farm, near where the footpath leads across the fields to Astbury, where he frequently preached and stayed as the guest of Buckley. Prior to 1759 a Society had been formed in Congleton, and after this date Mr. Wesley appears to have devoted his attention chiefly to the town, which he visited nineteen times.

List of Members of the Society in 1759.[a]

Sam. Cockerham	Sarah Pyat	Elizabeth Foster
Ann Cockerham	Sarah Simpson	Ann Frost
Mary Davie	Mary Leigh	Sarah Hitchings
Sarah Davie	Sarah Toden	Mary Braddock
Sm. Troutbeck	Esther Boum	Jane Braddock
Ellen Troutbeck	Ths. Garside	Wm. Stubbs
Mary Forster	James Cumberbach	Mary Stubbs
Eliz. Forster	Mary Cumberbach	

Samuel Troutbeck, mentioned in the foregoing, was an apothecary, living in Mill Street; where, behind his premises, the Wesleyans built their first chapel. He was a zealous supporter of the cause, and was allowed to act as a local but not an itinerant preacher. He took the oaths required under the Conventicle Act of 1762; but continued his communion with the Church of England up to his death, which occurred in 1785, at the age of 82.[b] Mr. Wesley preached his funeral sermon from the text, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

Thomas Garside was Mayor of Congleton in 1792. He lived nearly opposite the chapel, where Wesley and Dr. Coke often stayed. He died 24 March, 1798.

The first chapel erected *circa* 1760, is on the east side of Mill Street,[c] and at the present time consists of a dilapidated brick building, deserted and fallen to decay. The indents in the wall shew the position of the rude pulpit, and the stone lintel over the entrance still remains. John Wesley often preached here; and, writing of one of his visits in 1764, he says—

"We made the same shift at Congleton as when I was here last, I stood in the window, having thrust as many women as it would contain in the house. The rest with the men stood in the meadow,[d]

[a] Dyson's "*Wesleyan Methodism in the Congleton Circuit*," published in 1856, from which I have epitomised many other matters here introduced.

[b] To Mr. R. Broad, of Congleton, grandson of Mr. Troutbeck, I am indebted for this information.

[c] Behind the "Admiral Vernon" Inn. After its abandonment as a chapel it was partitioned off into four small cottages.

[d] At that time the whole of Victoria Street was one extensive green meadow, which reached to the doors of the chapel.

and many of the townsmen were wild enough. I have scarce found such enlargement of heart since I came from Newcastle. The brutes resisted long, but at length were overcome; not above five or six excepted. Surely man shall not long have the upper hand; God will get unto himself the victory. It rained all the day till seven in the evening, when I began preaching at Burslem. Even the poor potters here are a more civilised people than the *better sort* (so called) at Congleton.

It is certain the spirit of the majority of the townspeople was prejudiced and antagonistic. Mr. Dyson describes the issue of the opposition usually met with at the weekly meetings:

"Sometimes they would kick a football in front of the chapel during divine service, or play a hurdy-gurdy, or beat the drum,—let dogs loose in the midst of the congregation,—hurl dirt, rotten eggs, and other kinds of offensive material. And this was done, not by the baser sort, but by the (so-called) gentlemen of the town. But their reward was at hand. Besides David and Samuel, some others of the persecuting mob were subdued, and won by the truth which at first had awakened their hostile feelings. The career of the rest was brought to a far different termination. It is said, on the authority of that excellent minister, the Rev. G. Lowe, that they were put down in the following singular manner. It seems that at this particular time, a number of unusually tall and powerful men were attracted to the chapel. Being wishful to hear the gospel in peace, and finding that was impossible so long as the mob was allowed to proceed without a check, they determined to take the matter into their own hands, and try the effect of physical force. In order to accomplish their purpose, they concealed themselves, until the unsuspecting mob had collected and commenced their usual annoyance. This was the signal for the assault, out rushed the ambush, and blows began to fall with terrible effect. The astonished rabble, panic-stricken, broke and fled in all directions. So effectual was the lesson thus taught, that they never could be rallied again."

About the year 1767 a new chapel was erected on a site of ground in Wagg Street, which would seat upwards of four hundred people. This gave place, in 1808, to the present commodious building, which is built entirely of brick. The interior is of ample proportions and graceful appearance, and will accommodate upwards of one thousand people. A spacious circular gallery terminates on each side the choir and organ loft. The organ is one of good tone, and was erected in 1846, when the vestry and heating apparatus were added.

Wesleyan Chapel.

Trustees of the present Chapel.

Matthew Mayer	William Forster	Charles Barlow
Charles Shaw	Joshua Staton	George Barlow
Joseph Allen	William Pedley	Matthew Hand
Richard Lowe	Richard Lowe (Currier)	Charles Pedley
John Andrew	Samuel Wood	John Oakes
William Drakeford	William Booth	

The Sunday School, established in 1799, during the ministry of the Rev. Jeremiah Brettell, and held in a house in Moody Street, was afterwards removed to Wagg Street, and occupied the same site as the present chapel. New commodious Day and Sunday Schools were erected in 1869, and stand adjacent to the Chapel.

Largely connected with the first Sunday School is the name of John Ball. He kept a boy's academy in Wagg Street, and his old half-timbered house, the one that Wesley last visited after his farewell sermon, is still standing.

LIST OF WESLEYAN MINISTERS,[e]

CONGLETON CIRCUIT.

1803	Wm. Shelmerdine	1803	Thomas Pinder
1804	,,	1804	Henry Anderson
1805	G. Snowden	1805	John Hearnshaw
1806	John Beaumont	1806	John Fussell
1807	,,	1807	William Hill
1808	Thomas Hutton	1808	John Hanwell
1809	,,	1809	T. Lessey, jun.
1810	Z. Yewdall	1810	,,
1811	R. Hopkins	1811	J. Wheelhouse
1812	,,	1812	William Ault
1813	,,	1813	Peter Prescott
1814	Cuth. Whitesides	1814	James Hyde
1815	,,	1815	Jos. Lewis
1816	John Denton	1816	Robt. Bentham
1817	,,	1817–8	C. Hulme
1818–20	T. Hutton	1819–20	A. Watmough
1821–2	J. Brookhouse	1821–2	M. Cousens
1823–4	W. Harrison	1823–4	J. Sheriffe
1825–6	W. Moulton	1125–6	J. Jackson
1827–9	R. Smetham	1827–9	J. Smetham
1830–2	J. Miller	1830–2	J. B. Wittingham
1833–4	G. Burley	1833–5	S. Tindall
1835–6	S. Sewell	1836–7	W. Davis
1837–8	J. Keeling	1838–40	W. Parker
1839–41	W. Lindley	1841	James Bumstead
1842–3	J. Miller	1842–3	J. T. Yeates
1844–5	J. B. Holroyd	1844–5	C. Hawthorne
1846–8	John Raby	1846	Abraham Stead
1849–51	John D. Carey	1847–9	Thomas Brooks
1852–4	George Oyston	1850–2	George Hurst
1855–8	Joshua Priestley	1853–5	John B. Dyson
1856–8	G. Smith		
1858–61	W. Sugden	1858–61	W. W. Duke
1861–4	J. Gay Wilson	1861–4	Abel Burgess
1864–7	J. S. Thomas	1864–7	Geo. Holbrey
1867–70	Wm. Forster	1867–70	Thos. Shaw
1870–3	Aaron Edman	1870–2	Geo. Oyston
1872–3	S. Merrill	1872–3	C. E. Beecroft
1873–6	Mark Shaw	1873–6	Wm. Jackson

[e] For the completion of this list I am beholden to Mr. George Pedley, of Congleton.

1876–9	E. Maden	1876–9	W. Greenwood
1876–77	C. J. Back	1877–80	J. Phillips
1879–82	S. McAulay	1879–82	Geo. Watson
1880–3	T. Darlington		
1882–5	J. S. Jones	1882–5	G. Reid
1883–4	C. W. Cook	1884–5	R. Stevenson
1885	J. B. James	1885	R. Smith

The denomination, known as Wesleyan New Connexion, possesses a substantial chapel in Queen Street, off West Street; and the Wesleyan Connexion have good branch chapels situated on the road to Buglawton, and on a byway off Rood Lane.

Baptist Chapel.

WHEN the Rev. George Marris was suspended from the Independent Chapel in 1822 because he espoused the opinions contained in what was known as Lady Huntingdon's Doctrine, his first efforts were to build a place of worship where the friends of that denomination might meet. This was accomplished, and the present small chapel in Moor Street erected the same year. The Rev. Mr. Newman was the next minister, after whom the chapel became the property of the Baptists, who still worship there, but have no resident minister.

Primitive Methodism.

THE name of Hugh Bourne carries with it the history of the foundation of Primitive Methodism. He was the third son of Joseph Bourne, and was born at Fordhays, co. Stafford, 3 April, 1772. Expelled from the old Methodists' Society solely for his adherence to outdoor meetings, he, along with William Clowes, was the means of forming a connexion which eventually spread over most of England. Their first Camp Meeting was held on the mountain side of Mow Cop, Sunday, 31 May, 1807; when many people came from Congleton, Wheelock, Burslem, and Macclesfield. It has since been an annual celebration, and is attended by thousands of people. The Primitive Methodist Chapel is a neat brick building, situated off Lawton Street, and was erected in the year 1821.

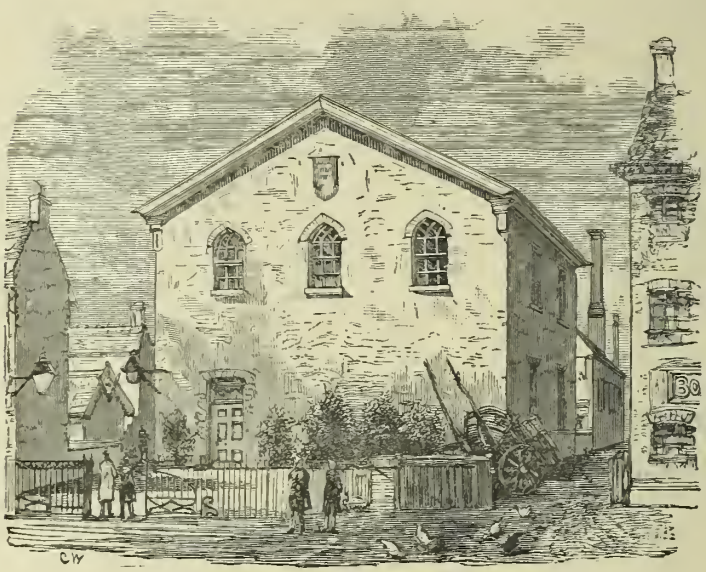
Masonic Hall.

THOUGH the last mentioned in this history, the Masonic Hall is by no means the least important of Congleton institutions. A remarkable halo of interest, which attaches itself to others as well as to members of the ancient and honoured Craft, hangs about its history. The building shewn in the illustration is a perfect picture of the Congregationalists' first place of worship, formed by Captain Scott, and mentioned on page 255.

Following the steady revival of Freemasonry in England, which began with the first decade of the last century, seven country Lodges were constituted, of which two were in Chester[a] and one in Congleton. This Lodge had an existence of thirty-five years, and held its meetings at the "Red Lion" Inn. By the calendar of 1736 its Registered No. was 36, but no name appears. In the year 1759, along with twenty other Lodges, this one at Congleton, then No. 32, and still assembling at the "Red Lion," was erased out of the Book of Regular Lodges. This appears in the Constitutions of 1767, and is reprinted here from Captain Astley Terry's[b] introduction to *Records of the Eaton Lodge*, which also gives the reason for the extinction:

[a] Held in the old "Crown and Mitre" and "Spread Eagle" Taverns.

[b] Brother Captain Astley Terry, 60th Rifles, Adjutant 5th Batt. Cheshire Rifle Volunteers, was admitted a joining member of the Eaton Lodge in 1874; appointed S.W. the year after, and elected W.M. in 1876. He compiled the "*Records of the Eaton Lodge*," (published by Brother Andreas Edward Cokayne in 1877) to which I am much indebted for the information contained in this chapter.



Masonic Hall.
From a Drawing by Mr. Charles Wilson.

"Grand Lodge, at the *Devil* Tavern, was held on Nov. 29th, 1759, in due Form. Present, the Master, Wardens, and Assistants of the *Stewards' Lodge*, and the Masters and Wardens of *Seventy-one* lodges. Ordered that the following twenty-one lodges, having neither contributed to the General Fund of *Charity*, nor otherwise had any communication with the *Grand Lodge*, nor even met for several years, according to the best information that could be obtained, be erased out of the Book of Regular Lodges, viz:

"No. 32, Red Lion at Congleton, Cheshire."

[Here follow the names of the twenty other lodges.]

For thirty years Congleton was without a Freemasons' Lodge. A new one was constituted in 1789, and named the Independent. This was No. 550, and held its meetings at the "Black Lion and Swan" Inn. The following were the Brethren present on the Festival of St. John the Baptist, in 1790, when a sermon was preached in St. Peter's Church by Brother the Rev. Page Godfrey:

Congleton Lodge.

Bro. Lowe	Bro. G. Reade	Bro. Wilkinson
,, Jackson	,, Godfrey	,, Stonehewer
,, Topp	,, Houghton	,, James
,, Johnson	,, W. Reade	,, Morgan
	,, Robinson	

Macclesfield Lodge.

Bro. Holdfield	Bro. Plant	Bro. Bayley
,, Langford	,, Frost	,, Hall
,, Coleby	,, Lomas	,, Gosling
,, Furness	,, Nield	,, Wilson
,, Watson	,, Saywell	,, Evans
,, Johnson	,, Morgan	,, Hulme
,, Henshaw	,, Boden	,, Hesline

The Independent Lodge, No. 550, was subsequently changed to No. 459; and in 1805 was removed from Congleton to the "White Lion," Lane End,[c] Staffordshire, where it became the "Independent Lodge of the United Pottery." It was finally erased by Grand Lodge, 5 March, 1828.

Not till 1846 was another Lodge formed in Congleton, and then (as Captain Terry says) chiefly owing to the energy of Mr. Gibbs Crawfurd Antrobus, of Eaton Hall, and a few other Masons. The Warrant, dated 27 August, 1846, was signed by Lord Zetland, G.M., Lord Worsley, D.G.M., and William H. White, G.S., and constituted the undermentioned brethren into a Lodge, No. 777, to be held at the "Golden Lion" Inn,[d] High Street, on the Wednesday nearest the full moon:

Bro. John Smith,[e] as W.M.	Bro. Robert Oliver
,, John Dyer, as S.W.	,, Charles Wilson
,, Thos. Wallworth, as J.W.	,, Thomas Hope
,, Patrick Halpin	

At the first meeting, 2 September, 1846, the following brethren, in addition to those mentioned in the Warrant, became members of the Lodge:

[c] Now named Longton.

[d] Long since transformed into shop premises. Now tenanted by Messrs. Hill & Son.

[e] Brother John Smith, of Langley, has been fitly named "the father" of the Eaton Lodge, being its first W.M. He resigned *circa* 1850, died Jan. 1870. An admirable photograph of this worthy Brother is given in "*Records of the Eaton Lodge.*"

Bro. Edward Stocker[f]	Bro. John McCracken
„ Peter Ullivero[g]	„ John Johnson

The first Officers of the Eaton Lodge were:

Bro. John Smith, W.M.
„ John Dyer, S.W.
„ Thomas Wallworth, J.W.
„ Edward Stocker, Treas.
„ Patrick Halpin, Sec.
„ Robert Oliver, S.D.
„ Charles Wilson, J.D.
„ Thomas Hope, I.G.
„ John McCracken, Tyler

Admissions:

1846.	1847.
William Winter	Edward Joyce
G. Crawfurd Antrobus[h]	Thomas Brightmore
Charles Johnson	G. Gorham Holmes, B.A.
William Starkey	Theodore J. Grocott
John Wild	William Bloor
William Hadfield	Randal Owen
John Wilson	
John Snelson	
John Dakin	
George Barlow[i]	
Joseph Bayley	

The name of Eaton Lodge was given to No. 777, the number of which was changed in the year 1863 to 533. The lodgeroom was removed in 1855 from the "Golden Lion" to the "Bull's Head": afterwards in 1877 to the "Lion and Swan"; thence in 1878 to the present handsome premises in Mill Street.

[f] Landlord of the "Lion and Swan." [g] Landlord of the "Bull's Head."

[h] Brother Gibbs Crawfurd Antrobus, of Eaton Hall, like Brother John Smith, was one of the chief founders of the Eaton Lodge. He was made S.W. in 1847, and served the office of W.M. both in 1847 and 1854. An Address from the brethren of Congleton, Macclesfield, and Crewe, was presented to him in 1857 (then P.G.S.W.) on the occasion of their erecting the east window of Eaton Church as a record of their esteem for him. He died 1861, when many brethren, accompanied by Lord de Tabley and other Provincial Grand Officers, attended his funeral at Astbury Church. An excellent portrait of Brother Antrobus is also contained in "*Records of the Eaton Lodge.*"

[i] Brother George Barlow was elected W.M. in 1852, and was Organist to the Lodge for many years. He died 16 April, 1886, aged 70 years, and was buried at the Parish Church of Astbury, where he had been the respected Organist for forty-seven years.

The following are the present brethren of the Eaton Lodge, (1887):

Bro. John Wilson
„ A. E. Cokayne[j]
„ T. G. Sheldon
„ William Blackshaw
„ Samuel Blackshaw[k]
„ Ed. Byron Franceys
„ A. C. Bond
„ Rev. John Lomax
„ Thomas Chaddock
„ Dennis Bradwell
„ Thomas A. Daniel
„ S. Cotterill
„ Col. Astley F. Terry
„ John Broadhurst
„ James Ed. Reade
„ Henry Barlow
„ Joseph C. Bradbury
„ William Beckett
„ William Orrey
„ James Laithwood
„ Rev. J. E. Colyer
„ Charles W. Jackson
„ Samuel Pearson

Bro. William Williams
„ James Procter
„ John Booth
„ Major H. P. M. Wylie
„ A. C. Meir
„ Arthur Andrew
„ Alfred S. Sheldon
„ Alfred Berry Brewster, Bey
„ George Lockett
„ W. Thompstone
„ Robert Head
„ Alfred R. Jeffs
„ Ed. Arthur Shaw
„ John Brown
„ Anthony Shaw
„ Percy J. Sheldon
„ Richard Nunnerley
„ Thomas S. Sheldon
„ Walter Kent
„ Thomas A. Daniel, jun.
„ Edward Hollinshead
„ Thomas Chaddock-Lowndes
„ Joseph Rogers

A Royal Arch Chapter, named the Warren Chapter, was consecrated and opened at the Masonic Hall, Congleton, in 1880. The following are the Companions in 1887:

A. E. Cokayne
S. Blackshaw
T. A Daniel
W. Orrey
S. Cotterill
W. Williams
T. G. Sheldon
Major Wylie
T. Chaddock
A. C. Meir
John Booth
Alfred S. Sheldon
Robert Head
W. Thompstone
Thomas S. Sheldon
Alfred Broad

[j] Bro. Cokayne has done much for Masonry in Congleton, having been a zealous member of the Lodge for twenty-three years. He occupied the Chair of W.M. in 1867 and 1875, and still holds the office of Treasurer. He removed from Congleton in 1880, and now resides at Bakewell, in the County of Derby. On May 26, 1887, a new Masonic Lodge was founded for Bakewell, when Bro. Cokayne was installed as the first W.M. at its consecration in Haddon Hall.

[k] For much cheerfully rendered assistance in compiling this chapter I am indebted to my good friend, Bro. S. Blackshaw, P.M., the respected Secretary to the Eaton Lodge.

Additions and Corrections.

JOHN WHITEHURST, CLOCKMAKER.

IT will be observed throughout this work that no attempt has been made to furnish much family history. A brief notice, however, of the above-named Congleton celebrity, it is thought may not be out of place in these concluding pages.

The distinguished JOHN WHITEHURST was born in Congleton 10 April, 1713, and was the son of John Whitehurst, clockmaker, also of Congleton, where for many generations the family had lived and owned considerable property.[a] Beyond the fact of his being the father of the more skilful workman little further is known of John Whitehurst, the older. But the following memorandum addressed by him to the Mayor is worth producing:

"March y^e^ 14^th^ 1724

	s.	*d.*
for Repareing y^r^ hand of y^e^ Church Clock	1	0
for Repareing y^e^ Chimes	2	0
for 6 Brass Collors for y^r^ Mill att 14 pence p^r^ pound	6	10
in all	9	10

Sir,

I desire you will Be Pleased to order this small Bill to be paid & you will oblige

y^r^ Servant,

John Whitehurst."

(*Town Accounts.*)

[a] The family held property in Congleton as late as 1824, when it was purchased by the Corporation from Mr. John Whitehurst, of Derby, and his brother, Mr. Charles Howard Whitehurst, of London.

In 1735, when twenty-five years old, the second John Whitehurst removed from Congleton to Derby, where he established himself as a clock and watch maker, having first made the great clock of the Guild Hall as the purchase of his freedom. In 1774 being appointed "Stamper of Weights for regulating the gold coin," he went to reside in London, where he died 18th February, 1788, aged 75 years. Whitehurst was a scientific scholar, and wrote several valuable books. His "An Enquiry into the Original State and Formation of the Earth," appeared in 1778. He contributed several interesting papers to the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, of which he was a member. In 1787 he published "An attempt towards obtaining invariable Measures of Length, Capacity, and Weight, from the Mensuration of Time."

THE ROYAL JUBILEE.

The commemoration of the fiftieth year of the glorious reign of Her Most Gracious Majesty, QUEEN VICTORIA, was recognised in Congleton in a manner well worthy the name and past history of the old borough; and in no provincial town were the testimonies to the people's loyalty more emphatic and significant. By beautiful decorations, consisting of gorgeous flags, triumphal arches, and wealth of evergreens and flowers, the familiar thoroughfares were completely transformed. Beacon fires blazed from the hills of Mow Cop and Congleton Edge. Nearly 4000 school children paraded the town on 23rd June, and were treated to a substantial tea by the Mayor, Mr. Howard. By public subscription, a feast was given in the Town Hall, to over 800 people above 60 years of age. In further celebration of the event a handsome pavilion has been erected in the Public Park, and many improvements and other additions made to this the people's recreation ground.

Page 51, footnote [r]—for "Royal Commission at Chester" *read* "Royal Commission at Congleton."

Page 55—Roger Wilcockson was Town Clerk *circa* 1662.

Page 188—the following were the armorial bearings of the MALBONS of Congleton: A staff crenellée in bend, impaling, a chevron between three roses barbed and seeded. Crest—a griffin's head erased.

Page 191, line 7—for "circular belfry window," *read* "circular-headed belfry window."

Page 238—In Mr. Hall's History of Nantwich, page 502, I find the following extracts:

"1637, April 11, Married Andrew Bowrye minister of God's word and Anne Slade"
(*Wybunbury Reg.*)

"1646, May 3, Thos. son of Andrew Bowrie Minister"
(*Nantwich Bapt. Reg.*)

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